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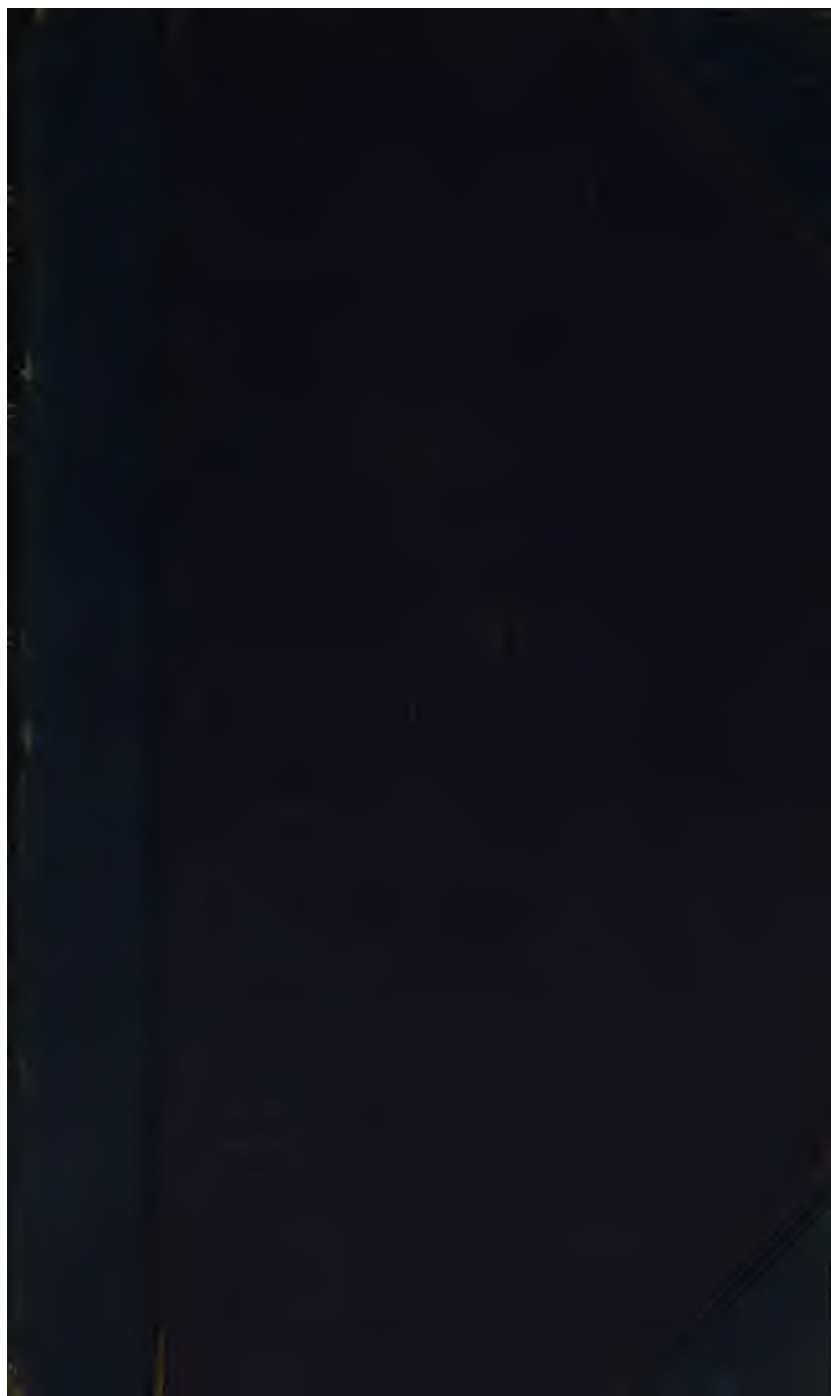
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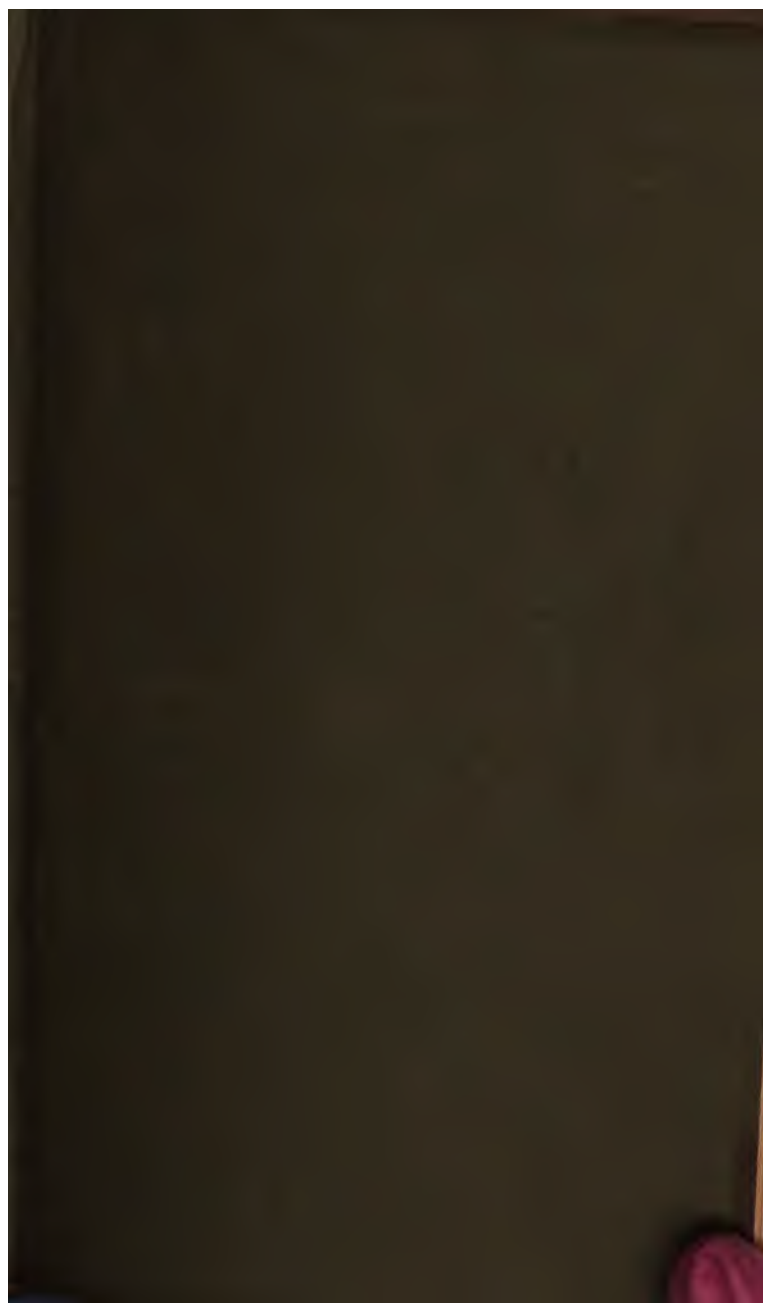
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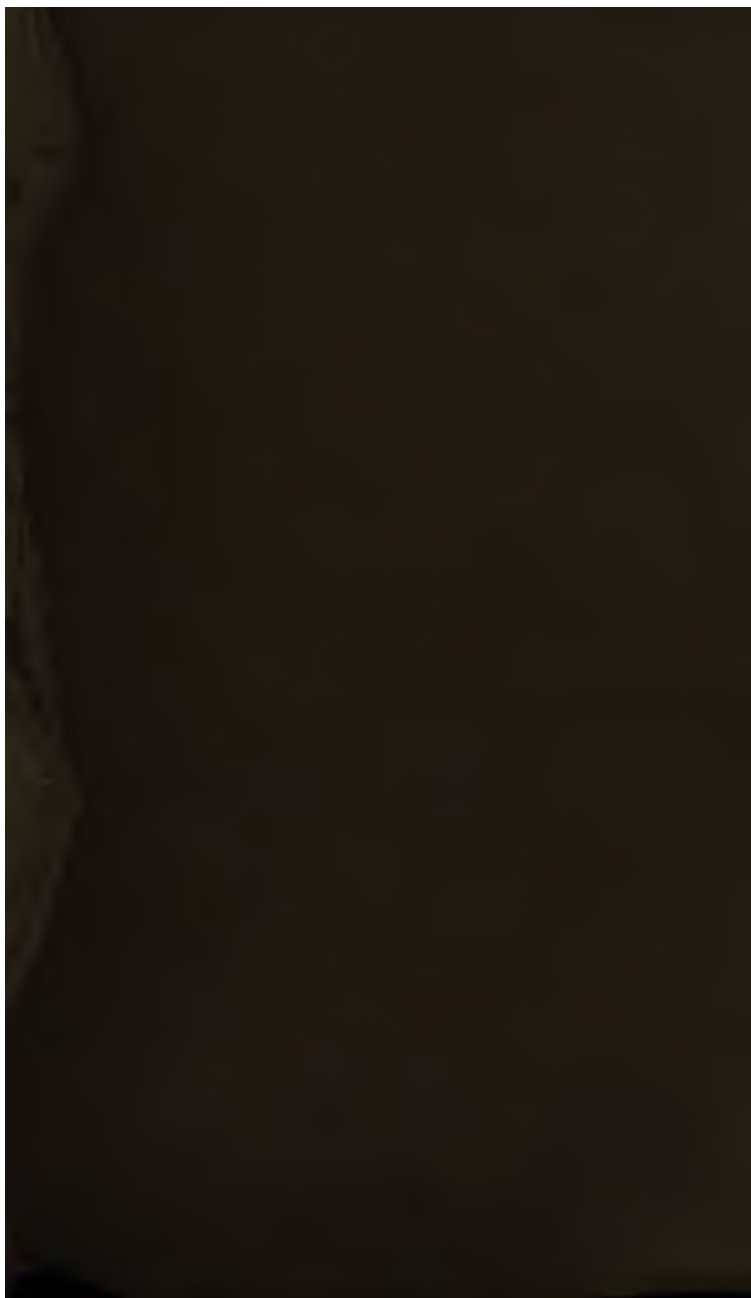
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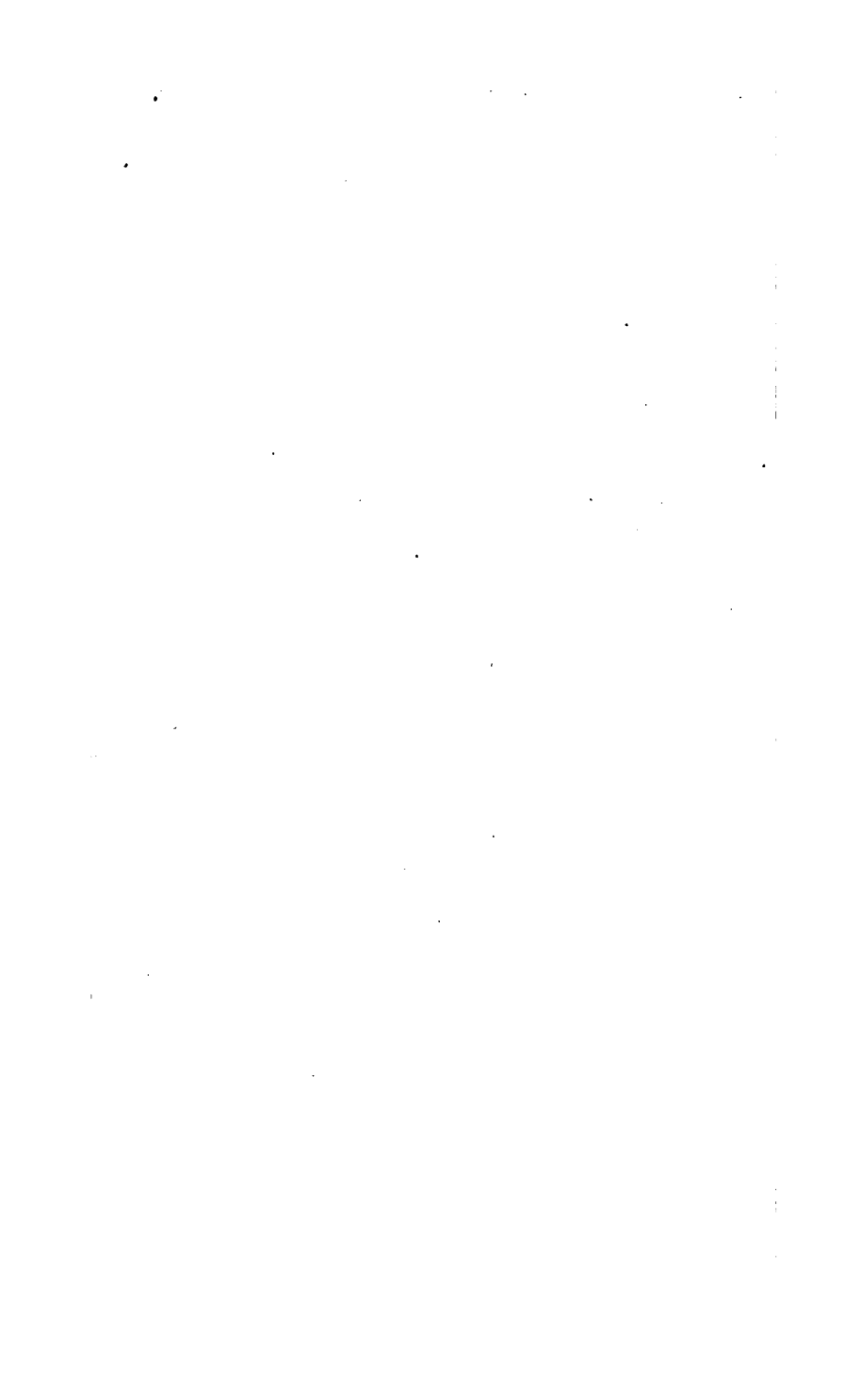


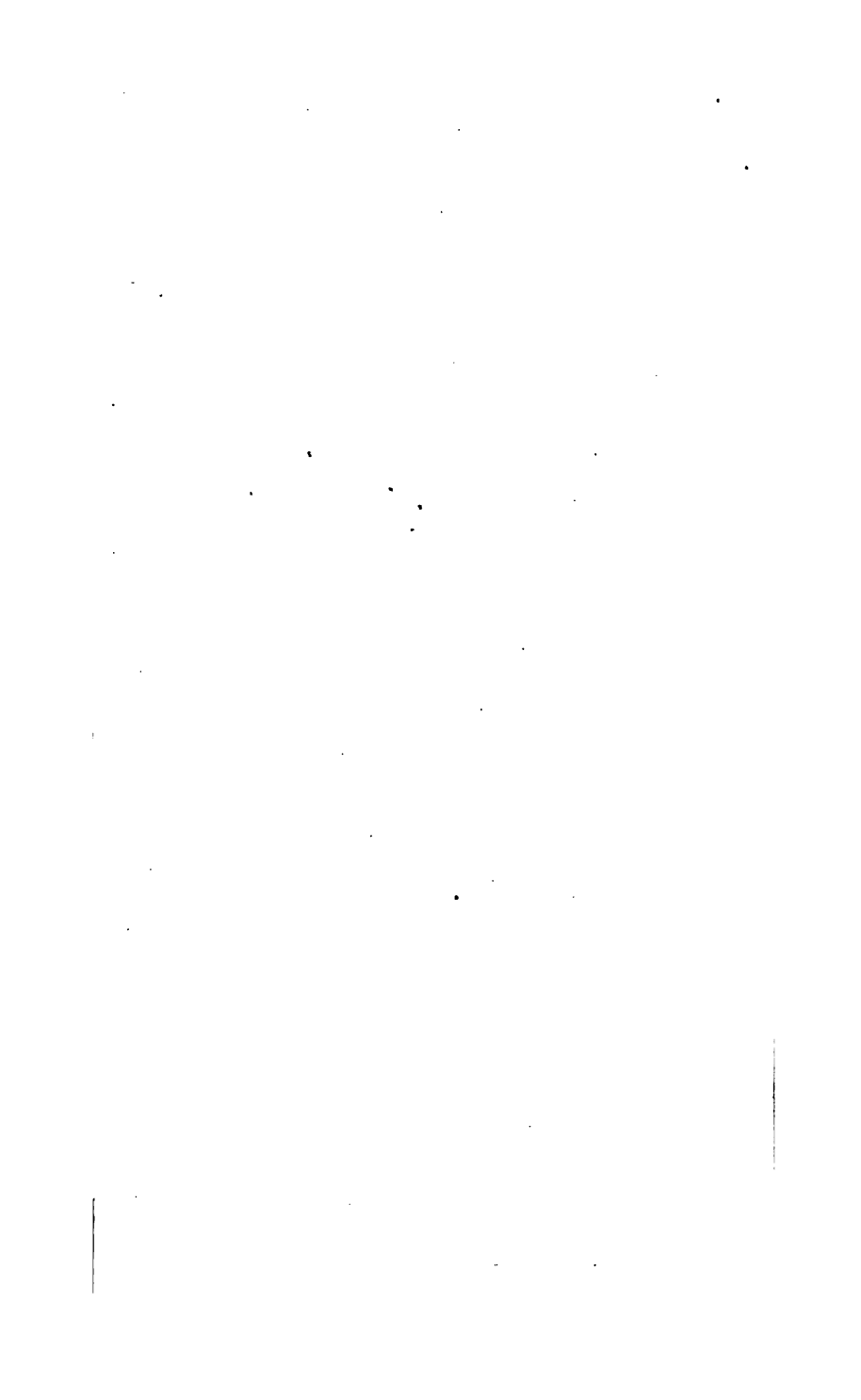




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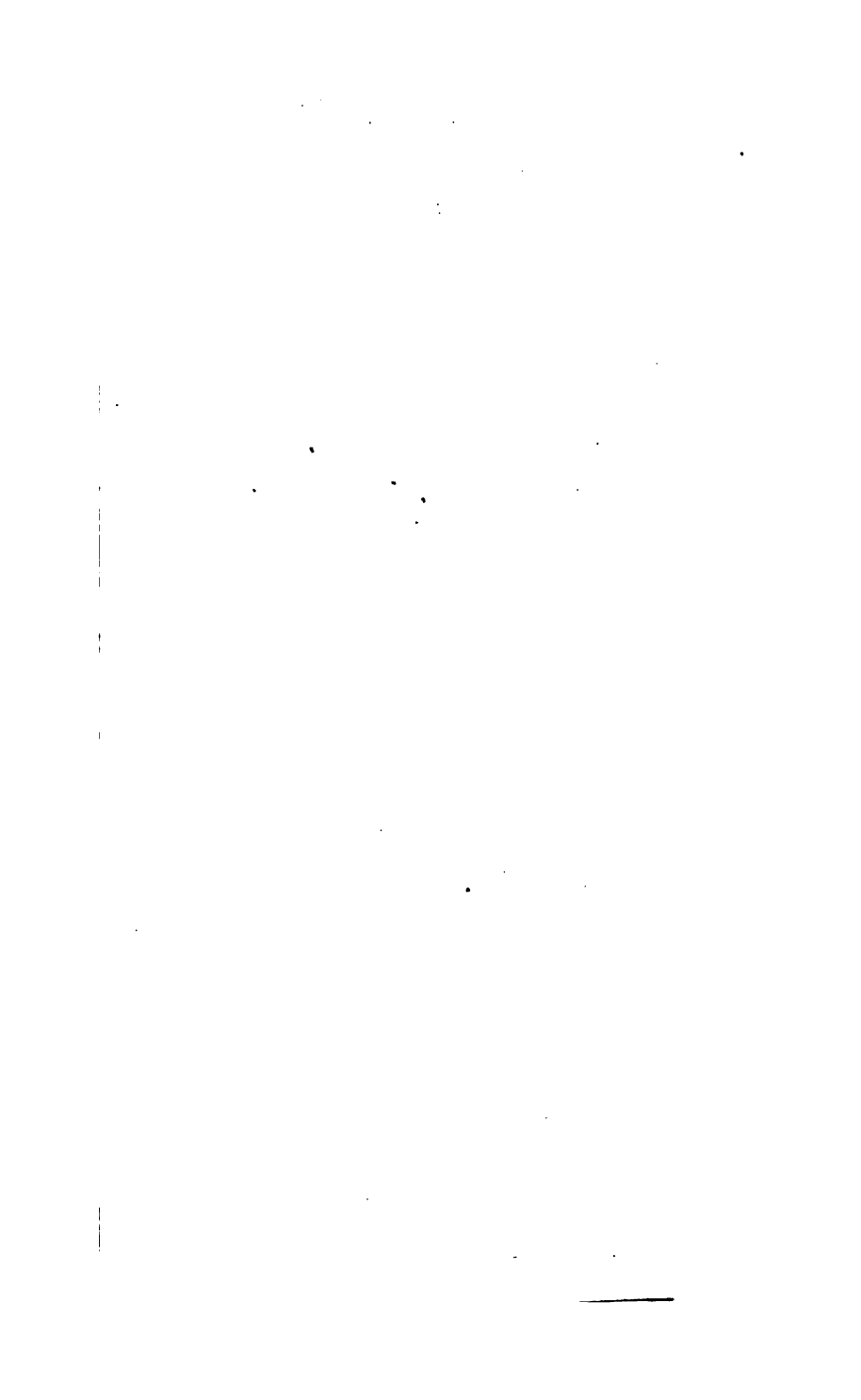


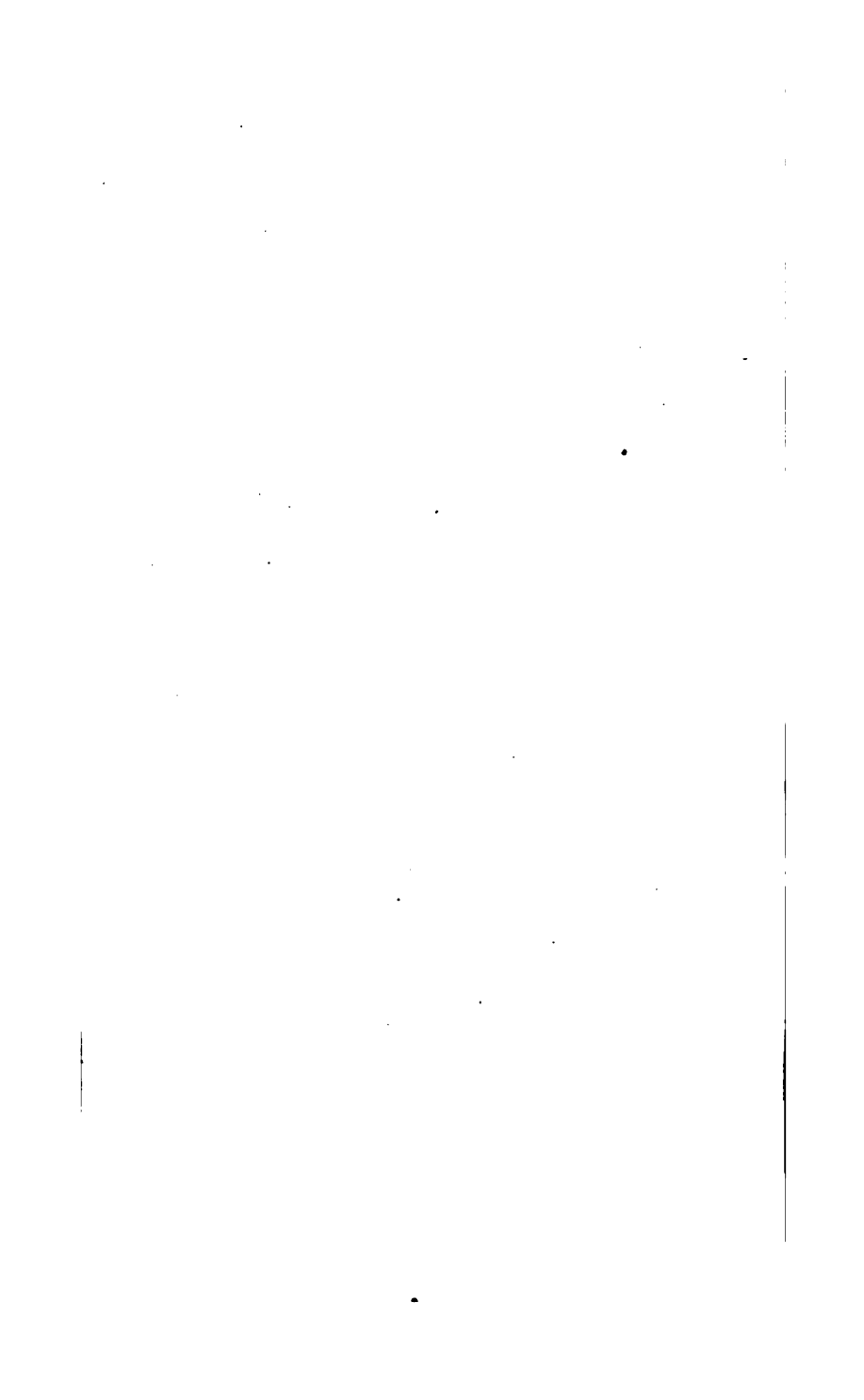




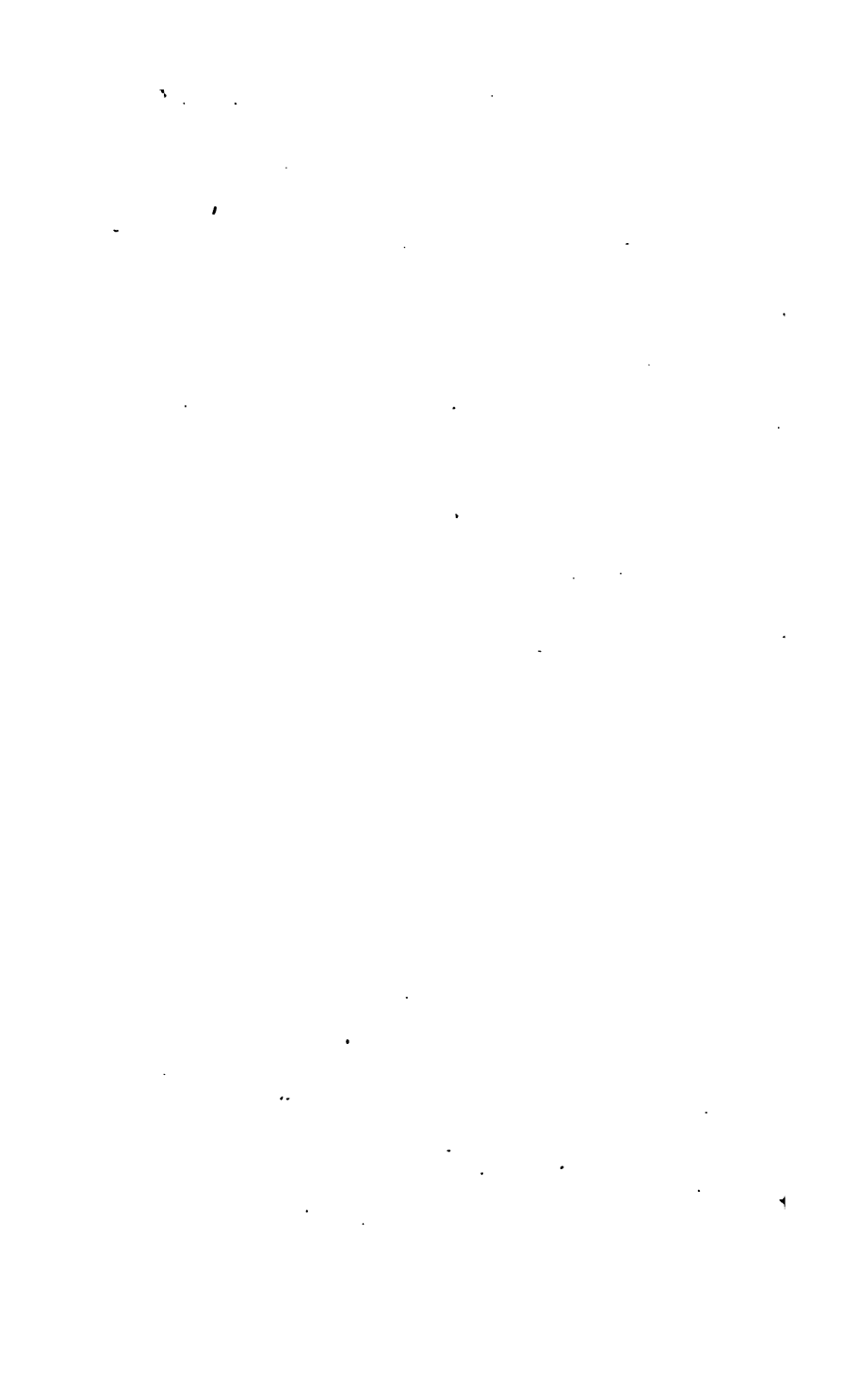








**LORENZ STARK.**



# LORENZ STARK.

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## CHAPTER I.

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MR. LORENZ 'STARK, who resided in Hamburg, was regarded by all its inhabitants as a very singular, yet, at the same time, a very excellent old man. His whole exterior, both with respect to dress and behaviour, bespoke at the first glance, the old German simplicity of character. His dress was all of one colour, either gray or brown, but of materials of the best quality; the wig he usually wore was a short crop, but, on particular occasions, he exchanged it for a well-powdered peruke; his small hat had been twice out of fashion and had twice come into it again; he wore his stockings folded

with great neatness above the knee, and his thick-soled shoes, on which shone a pair of very small, but highly polished, buckles, were square at the toe. He was no friend to superfluous linen, either at the breast or at the wrists, and the gayest part of his dress was a cravat of the finest muslin, edged with lace.

The failings of this worthy man, which were neither few in number, nor a little annoying to those who were obliged to live with him, were so closely interwoven with his best qualities, that the one could scarcely be said to exist without the other. Being a man of stronger sense than most of those by whom he was habitually surrounded, he was apt to be very arbitrary and self-willed: conscious that no well-founded reproach could be made against him, either with regard to his principles or conduct, he was a very free, and frequently a very unwelcome, censor of the actions of others; and being, from the natural goodness of his

temper, incapable of being easily incensed at the faults of others, and yet unwilling to let them pass without reproof, he was very ironical and sarcastic.

In point of circumstances, he was a wealthy man; for during the many years that he had laboured and toiled, he had steadily adhered to that simple principle,—that, in order to become substantial, one's receipts ought to exceed one's expenditure. As his beginnings had been but small, and as he owed his whole fortune to his own industry and economy, he lived very sparingly in his earlier years; but even long after, when he had succeeded in clearing his first five thousand crowns, which he used to say had cost him more pains to get than all his subsequent wealth, the original spirit of economy still pervaded his household, and indeed, this was the principal cause of the ever-increasing growth of his fortune.



Of a numerous family, Mr. Stark had only two children left : a son, who, after the example of his father, had devoted himself to commerce, and a daughter. The latter was married to a Doctor Herbst, one of the most celebrated medical practitioners of the place, a man not less skilled in the production of life than in its maintenance.

He had a whole house full of little ones ; and, on this very account, the daughter was the favourite of the old man, who was doatingly fond of children. As the doctor lived near the church which Mr. Stark was in the habit of frequenting, it was arranged that he should dine every Sunday at his son-in-law's ; and many a time his piety would fain have missed church, could but his fondness as a grandfather have foregone the pleasure of seeing his darling grand-children. He always felt his heart dilated, when the little crowd rushed towards him with joyous exclamations as he entered the

house, and clinging to his hands and the skirts of his coat, wheedled from him the little presents, which he had in his pockets. When, during the grace before dinner, he sometimes caught the eyes of the little ones wandering, he would whisper to them: "Be devout! be devout!" whilst the very one who was all the while the least devout of all, was himself; for his whole heart was, where his eyes were, with his grandchildren.

With his son, on the contrary, Mr. Stark felt by no means contented. On the one hand, he was too much addicted to dissipation; he spent too much in clothes, horses, and carriages, but above all, he was too fond of frequenting coffee-houses and societies where play was encouraged; on the other hand, it vexed Mr. Stark to see that his son, as a merchant, possessed too little of the spirit of enterprise, and as a man, too little of the generosity and beneficence of his own character. He con-

sidered him as a kind of non-descript, a something between a miser and a spendthrift; two qualities which Mr. Stark held in equal detestation. He himself was the real economist, who, while he gathered and accumulated, did not so much keep money in view, as the many benefits which that money could realize. It is true, that when he saw no adequate object, he could not be induced to part with a single farthing, but when the object appeared to him worthy of the sacrifice, he would with the greatest composure in the world part with whole hundreds. But what appeared most unpardonable in his son was, that though he had now attained his thirtieth year, he still remained single, and that, to all appearance, he was likely to add another to the melancholy list of old bachelors. The father had declined persuading him to make any particular choice; the son had equally declined concluding any match without the consent of his father, and they differed too widely both in their tastes and

modes of thinking, ever to hope to see their wishes or choice in accordance.

Mr. Stark had transferred the superintendence of the whole of his business to his son, and as a recompense for his trouble and the responsibility of his charge, had entirely made over to him some not unimportant branches of the concern. All that he had reserved to himself was the management of the money affairs, which were very considerable.

Yet, at the same time, he never failed to keep an eye upon the whole of the business, and on the general conduct of his son, especially as he did not repose the greatest confidence in his commercial judgment. He constantly found something either neglected, not in accordance with his wishes, or at variance with his own principles, and this gave occasion to many very unpleasant scenes, which at length ended in a bitterness approaching to rancour on both sides.

Of this the subsequent scene, describing one of the most recent of these differences, and which was followed by very important consequences to the happiness and tranquillity of the family, may serve as an example.

CHAPTER II.

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YOUNG Mr. Stark had made an engagement to go to a public concert, and for that purpose had attired himself in a light brown velvet coat, with a gold-embroidered waistcoat. He had consumed rather too much time at his toilet, and entered, in a hustle, the private room of the counting-house, where at that moment the old gentleman was busily engaged in counting some money.

“John! John!” exclaimed young Mr. Stark, vehemently re-opening the door, which he had the instant before shut with violence.

“Good heavens,” said the father, at the same time taking off his spectacles, “what is the matter?”

The son asked for a candle to seal a letter, hastened to his desk, and in a kind of half answer, said to the old gentleman aside; "I am busy,—I have some letters to write."

"And in such a hurry?—I again repeat, what I have frequently said before: business is better done slowly and surely, not by starts and fits. But after all, the sooner one gets away from the desk, the sooner"—

The sooner one reaches the gaming table, he would have said; but as John entered at that moment with a light, he recollected himself, and suppressed the words.

"To whom are you writing?" resumed he, after some moments silence.

"To Joseph Born, in Stettin."

"To the son?"

"The name of the father is Augustus, and not Joseph."

"Well, my respects to him.—I frequently call to mind my meeting him, on my last summer's excursion, when I made his acquaintance. There is an excellent young man for you !"

"Aye, truly," said the son to himself, in a suppressed tone, "and a pity it is we cannot all be like him !"

"A regular, industrious, well-behaved young man. It would seem as if he had been born for a merchant ; full of an enterprising spirit, but that spirit tempered by solidity and reflection. And then, how simple and becoming in his exterior ! he is no friend of your velvets and embroidery ; and what above all I prize in him—he is no gambler. I am convinced, he has as yet to lose his first rubber.—If he does play, it is not with cards, but with his children ;



for he has such delightful children!—Ah yes; and the good old man his father, he can be a father to him with all his heart and soul. There is a happy man for you!—I know of fathers,” continued he, in a more subdued tone, “who might well break one of the commandments by coveting his happiness.”

“Confound these pens!” exclaimed the son, while he broke one after another upon the desk, and dashed them from him.

The old gentleman quietly surveyed him for some moments.—“You seem ruffled,” said he.

“Who would not be so?” again muttered the son to himself.

“And can it surely be I who am the cause of it? Was what I said not to your liking?”

He rose and went to his son's desk.—“ I know that you do not much like hints and allusions, but if necessary, I can speak out more plainly.”

“ Oh, there is no need of that,” said the son, who continued his writing.

The old man calmly took the pen from his son's hand, shook the ink from it, and laid it on the desk.—“ Look you,” resumed he, “ I feel daily more mortified at the reflection, that I have a man for my son of such latitude of head and such narrowness of heart; a man who on his finery and pleasure, or at whist or ombre, can squander away one ducat after another, and frequently by the dozen together; who but yesterday was again out at play till the very dead of the night; and yet who, if some generous action were to be done, would not perhaps be master of a single crown—

a man who is content to remain single, because, forsooth, he thinks no match good enough for him, and yet who has always sufficient to lavish on carriages and horses, to play the fine gentleman, and to sport velvet and embroidery.—I cannot be in the wrong,” continued he after a moment’s pause, “for you have nothing to say for yourself in reply.”

“Indeed I have,” said the son, rising with warmth, “but—”

“Speak out, what hinders you?”

“By heavens! I am weary of this sort of life!—”

“Oh! would to heavens I could but hope so!”

“I should suppose that by this time I have

a right to consider myself as a man and not as a child ; why then am I still treated like a child?"

" Son, son ! there are children of a larger growth !"

" I am not wanting in attention ; I do not neglect the affairs of the house ; I never lose sight of my respect and veneration towards you—"

" Only sometimes of a little of your obedience."

" I manage your property with fidelity, and yet—I cannot enjoy a single hour of quiet and repose ; every moment of my existence is embittered by endless reproaches, every amusement, every miserable pleasure is begrudged me."

"Your words are very harsh, but very true. Yes, every *miserable* pleasure!"

"Miserable, because it costs me scarcely any thing, or at the most, a mere trifle. And pray, what was my loss, when I did lose?"

"The most precious of all possessions—time."

"And am I then to have no enjoyment at all of my youth? Must I continually drudge like you; dress like you; like you stint myself in every thing; and like you—"

"Well, at what do you hesitate? speak out!"

"Like you—economize by crowns, in order to throw away by hundreds?"

"Throw away!" exclaimed the old gentle-

man, to whom nothing in the world appeared so insupportable, as that children should reflect upon their parents for their free disposal of wealth, which had been acquired by their own industry.—

“Who could ever have imagined that a son of mine would take upon himself the task of becoming my tutor. To throw away?—What do you mean? What do you call throwing away? Speak!—” He approached his son, and pressed him somewhat forcibly by the arm.—“To keep one’s purse open for every honest man who needs assistance; do you call that throwing away?”

“Honest!” muttered the son; “yes if they were all so!”

“Oh, I have but rarely been deceived. I examine my man pretty closely before I part

with my money. Then pray, what do you call throwing away? Speak!"

"Why, you lend to all the world—and without deriving any advantage from it."

"Senseless young man! without deriving any advantage from it?" He withdrew his hand from his son's arm, and surveyed him with a look full of contempt.—"This advantage I derive from it, to witness the well-being of my fellow-men. Do you account that as nothing?—Yet when the hour shall come, when I must leave everything behind me; when I shall be borne along the street to my last home, then it is that I trust many a man will say with tears in his eyes: I weep for that honest man, I, and my wife, and my children, have to thank him for all our welfare; I was in need, and went to him; he raised me up, and I was enabled to preserve

my credit and my honour.—But as to thee—Yet why stay I here preaching to the wind? Thy head is full of its own system of philosophy, and would to heaven it were a better one!—But go on with what you have to do. Write away, write away!”



## CHAPTER III.



MR. STARK again seated himself quietly at his desk, without noticing that his son paced with a quick and hurried step up and down the room. It was a maxim with him, that a child smarting from correction, should be allowed time to sob itself into quiet again, and that it is unreasonable to demand from a mind under excitement immediate repose and tranquillity. It is probable that the struggle in the heart of the son, on this as on former occasions, would have been decided in favour of filial love and respect, and that every thing would have resumed its former position, had not unfortunately a person, who for more than one reason was obnoxious to young Mr. Stark,

at that moment entered the room. This was a man of the name of Specht; one of the many small beginners in life, who on every emergency were trespassing on the goodness of the old gentleman, and, contrary to the wishes of the son, were too often successful. The person in question possessed an advantage over all the rest, for he was the god-son of Mr. Stark, who was also god-father to his child; a kind of relationship which, according to ancient usage, still appeared very important and venerable in the eyes of old Mr. Stark. But what chiefly excited the ill-will of the son against him, was a suspicion, raised by certain expressions, which had dropped from his father, that Mr. Specht had calumniated a young and amiable widow, of the name of Lyk, who was highly esteemed by him, but viewed by his father in quite an opposite light, and thus had originated, all those bitter remarks,

which Mr. Stark had from time to time thrown out against her.

“ Ah !” exclaimed Mr. Specht, in his usual fawning and hypocritical way, while, the instant he entered, he, to his great vexation, encountered the son, who was still pacing up and down the room, “ Ah, my worthy Mr. Stark, am I then so happy as at the very threshold”—

Never had his profound bows, and smirking manner appeared so odious to the young gentleman as at this particular moment—  
“ What is the matter? What do you want?” cried he, accosting very unceremoniously the amazed and startled visitor.

“ Heavens !” said Mr. Specht, again seizing the latch of the door, “ I hope I am not intruding ; I trust I cause no interruption.”

“Very possibly you do, sir; time is precious.”—

“Very true, sir, very true; it is so even in my estimation, how much more then, in your regard, who carry on so large a business, who conduct so extensive a concern!—Indeed at times I cannot conceive—”

“I asked you what was the matter, what you wanted?—Possibly you are come on a borrowing visit, and that too before the old debt is paid off;—or perhaps you are come with a fresh stock of news relative to your neighbour the widow.—There!—address yourself to my father and ~~not~~ to me!”

While Mr. Specht had his eyes in every part of the room at once, and knew not whether he should go or stay, speak or be silent, old Mr. Stark, whose hearing had by

degrees become impaired, and who either did not hear at all, or was uncertain what he heard, turned upon his chair, and by a friendly welcome relieved him from his embarrassment — The son hurried again to his desk, and continued his writing.

“ Well, and what can I do to serve you,” said Mr. Stark, after different unimportant questions, “ for, my dear god-son, I know you are not used to come here for nothing.”

“ I—I would take the liberty,”—stammered out the latter, while from time to time he threw a sidelong glance of distrust toward the son,—“ within these few days there has been a favourable occasion—several little opportunities—”

“ I do not understand you: what opportunities?”

"I mean opportunities of doing something good for myself—of gaining some little advantages."

"So, so.—I am glad of it, my dear Specht; do not neglect it!"

"But—as is usually the case with beginners—our purses are so limited, so short! No sooner is the hand in, than you are at the bottom at once."—This, by the by, was one of Mr. Stark's numerous sayings, which Mr. Specht used carefully to note down, and employ again as occasion offered, and he had seldom found this mode of addressing the old gentleman fail of its intended object.—"And so—I wished—if it could be done without inconvenience—"

"To have a fresh supply; is it not so?—Come, out with it, out with it!"

Mr. Specht smiled, and patted repeatedly

with the very tip of his finger softly and coaxingly the shoulder of Mr. Stark.—

“ Ah, you are indeed the most excellent of men, my very worthy god-father.”—

“ Worthy, because I am so excellent a prophet. — But what were you speaking about to my son just now? Have you been telling him the object of your visit here to-day?”

“ It was my intention so to do—I was just on the point—but—the young gentleman—”

“ Very likely he was regretting the impossibility of serving you. Is it so?”

“ I could almost have thought as much.”

“ Yes, such may probably be the case.— Our circumstances are not always the same;

and possibly he may at present feel what it is to want the needful."

"He, he, he! my dear Mr. Stark, how well you know at times how to pass off a joke!"

"A joke!" said the old gentleman, pointing on the other side of the desk to the richly embroidered waistcoat of young Mr. Stark;—"Don't you see that my son has had occasion for his gold?—Well, every one to his taste. Some like the gold inside of the pocket, while others prefer to see it glittering on the outside."

These words, uttered not entirely in bad humour, and in a tolerably good-natured tone—for Mr. Stark, though of an ironical turn, was not malicious, and if the moment after falling into a passion, he began to grow jocose, it was a certain sign, that his tranquillity of mind had returned—these words, following



closely upon too bitter and too earnest reproaches, and spoken in the presence of a man so cordially hated and despised, could not fail to produce a very unfortunate effect upon the mind of his son. He started up with vehemence, muttered some angry, but inarticulate words, hurried to the door and slammed it violently after him.

## CHAPTER IV.



"GRACIOUS heavens!" exclaimed Mr. Specht, who in his alarm had let drop both his arms to his side, "the young gentleman was quite in a passion, in a perfect fury. I hope it was not my presence that—"

"Oh no, oh no," said Mr. Stark in a softened tone, for he had already inwardly repented of his hastiness; "it is merely his way; he means no harm."—Saying this, he gave Mr. Specht the sum he needed, and added a few words of friendly counsel, advising him not to misapply the money, nor entangle himself in more business than he could well attend

to.—“As for the rest,” added he, “as we are all mortals, you know, and life is uncertain, I wish for some little memorandum; you may bring it me in the course of the afternoon.”

“Certainly, certainly,” said Mr. Specht, tapping him as before gently on the shoulder—“I felt sure, my dearest god-father, that you would lend me a helping hand in this business. My wife too said; Do go to him, Specht, such a man as Mr. Stark is not to be found the whole world over.—So—good morning, good morning!”

Mr. Specht would have given the world to recall the unfortunate mention of his wife; but it was out, and he did not succeed in stealing away so quietly as he intended. Mr. Stark beckoned him to return, and shook his finger at him very significantly.—“Since you yourself have mentioned your wife, my dear

Specht, and as it slipped my memory till now, tell me candidly, are you not still rather in love with your wife?"

"Why—to be sure,"—stammered out Mr. Specht, for he was a newly married man—"to be sure."—

"The late Mr. Lyk was, I think, in the same predicament; and now, his widow—who squandered away his property in dress, dances, entertainments, and other fine doings—but you know better than I can tell you how things go on in that quarter. Their circumstances are very different to what they were.—Take care then, dear Specht; be upon your guard!"

“ But why, my dearest god-father, why all this?—My wife—”

“ Is too extravagant for me; she must have

every thing that's in fashion. And therefore it strikes me—that as you are but a beginner, and as in other respects, I know you to be a good economist—it strikes me that you may have a certain weak side, and that your young wife may have spied it out.—Have I hit it?”

“ Dearest, best of god-fathers.—”

“ One does not like to confess these things. It is all very well.—But I beg you as a friend, dear Specht, be careful! Be a man!—With a bad housewife, the best economist in the world would be ruined: there is no standing it. It is but attempting to fill a hollow sieve; were you to continue pouring in for all eternity, you could never succeed in filling it.—But I know very well,” continued he, smiling, after a moment's pause, and dwelling upon his words, “ what the way of women is.”—

“ Very true, very true, that is the point!”

said Mr. Specht, with a deep sigh and shrugging up his shoulders.

“How ingenious they are in driving the young husband into straits. I know to what caprices, vapours, hysterics, fainting fits, and God knows what besides, women are subject—and then, how all at once the glass rises, and again we have a clear summer-sky; then they begin to coax, wheedle, caress, and at last quite unexpectedly, as if without any direct object in view, they thus proceed to the attack.—And so, Mrs. —— wears this, and Mrs. —— wears that; Mrs. —— is always going abroad and Mrs. —— follows this and that fashion.—Well, what ridiculous pride! and pray, have we not a right to hold up our heads as high as they do?”

“Well to be sure!” exclaimed Specht, whose heart had become quite easy again at.

the good humour of the old gentleman: "one would suppose you had been actually present."

"And when they have got the good natured simpleton into the snare, how then will they kiss, and ogle, and fondle!"—

"Oh! this is their way to the life!" said Specht, while he put on a look of the greatest surprise—"You have hit it off quite after nature; feature for feature!"

"Oh, I know all this perfectly well. I have not been so long at school for nothing.—But zounds! god-son, a man must be a man; he must have a heart of flint or of iron!—Always loving, never in love; that is the maxim.—And what do we lose by adhering to it? Nay, on the contrary, how much are we the gainers; for he who truckles to a wife, has only a good time of it now and then; but he who maintains his

authority, has it always.—Or think you perhaps that the wife does not stand as much in need of the husband as the husband of the wife?—Nonsense, nonsense! my dear Specht, just as much; and, between ourselves, frequently a great deal more.”

“Well now, you shall see!”—said Specht, while he looked cautiously behind him, and put on the most determined air, of which his flat unmeaning face was capable;—“I shall reflect on this. From this time forward, I shall turn over a new leaf.”

“But always in a proper way, of course, in a proper way!”

“Oh, assuredly, the proper way is the very thing; that must never be lost sight of.”—He now pretended business which called him immediately home, and went his way accord-



dingly; most likely full of a firm resolution to venture upon nothing, of which he might have cause to repent, and to undertake nothing which he could not readily and effectually carry into practice.

CHAPTER V.

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DURING this tirade in which Mr. Stark had been indulging against the fair sex, he had entirely forgotten his altercation with his son. The latter, had shut himself up in his room, where he continued pacing up and down in a state of the greatest exasperation.

“To ill treat me in this manner!” exclaimed he; “me, his only son, and this too in presence of so contemptible, so despicable a fellow!”

Of so insignificant a creature he might have said, who makes his way through life by fawning and flattering, but who, after all, is not so bad a sort of fellow either.

“To expose me to contempt, to irony, to the bitter sneer of scorn, and that too in so malicious, ingenious, and studied a manner!”

In a vexatious manner, he might have said, but still in a way that was habitual to the old gentleman; which, on this occasion, presented itself unsought for, and which, after all,—as indeed was always the case with every thing that fell from Mr. Stark,—did not trench either upon honour or character.

“At the very time I was seated labouring at his business, to make such unfounded, such imaginary, such wounding reproaches!”

Unfounded, it is true, at least as far as regarded gaming and nightly revels, but still not altogether imaginary: for it was impossible for the father to account for his son's frequent and secret absence from home, other-

wise than by supposing that he was still following his former course of life, devoted as it had been to the gaming table and the coffee-house.

That his leisure moments, and sometimes the greater part of his nights too, were in reality employed in a very praiseworthy and very noble manner, was known to no one less than to the father; and there was a certain something about these very praiseworthy and noble actions, that the son was unwilling his father should know.

But young Mr. Stark was not, at the present moment, in a humour to listen to any reflections which might have excused the old gentleman, much less to such as tended to justify him. On the contrary, by means of the most vehement and overcharged expressions, he worked himself into a still greater degree of irritation, and finished at last by coming to a firm resolution once for all to change his situation, to

break off all connexion with his father, to quit not only his paternal roof, but also his native town, and with the small sum he had acquired by his own industry, to establish a concern of his own in some other place. Reason herself seemed not only to justify, but even to demand such a determination; for he had already completed his thirtieth year, and that too amidst so many vexations, so many harrassing cares and anxieties, that to live upon Hope for the next thirty years, would be the merest folly; and why he was bound to sacrifice to a whimsical, capricious, and incorrigible old man, more than the first and fairest half of his existence, was a problem beyond his power to solve. Against this his heart pleaded too loudly, and he did not find it written in the laws either of nature or of grace.

In fact, this separation from his father was not a new idea, but one which had been deliberately weighed, and matured for the moment of

execution. The questions, *how, where, and whereby* had long ago been answered; the *when* had alone remained undetermined. However this idea had always vanished, together with the rancour with which it had originated, and with the resentment by which it had been fostered. It now took firmer root than ever in the embittered mind of the young man, and, in a short time, had formed itself into a firm and irrevocable determination. It was grounded on a different motive than the whim and caprice of his father; but this motive, young Mr. Stark kept so profound a secret, that he scarcely dared confess it even to himself. It had always been his favourite project, to ally himself to one of the richest families of the place; now, all at once, love played him one of his wanton tricks, by fixing all his affections on a person, who did not possess one of those advantages which are usually pleaded as an excuse for love. She was neither remarkable for the beauty of her face or figure, nor in the bloom of youth, nor dis-

tinguished by any eminent mental endowments ; though, to say the truth, the latter would not have found a very zealous admirer in young Mr. Stark. Of property this lady possessed but very little, if we except a species of goods and chattels, which in reality is valuable only to the first possessor, and which can never be wholly transferred to another ; we mean, two lovely children. In short, it was the very Mrs. Lyk, on whose account Mr. Specht had become so odious to our lover, and whom we have heard so severely criticised by the father.

It is very well known, that during a lively dream, we often ask ourselves, whether we are awake, or merely dreaming ; and that, contrary to the true state of things, the answer always is, that we are awake. Even so it was with young Mr. Stark. Frequently, when sitting opposite to Mrs. Lyk, lost in tender reveries, had he asked himself very gravely, whether he was still free, or in love ; and the answer had invariably

been, that he was free. But after all, he did not feel very comfortable with this said freedom; for, if, even but in jest, he supposed the contrary to be true, which although quite incredible, was yet not quite impossible, he immediately foresaw the numberless sarcasms and bitter attacks, which he should have to endure, as well from his father at home, as from several families of the place, who, being burthened with that troublesome commodity—grown-up daughters, kept the keen eye of speculation fixed on so rich an heir, and so handsome and blooming a young gentleman as Mr. Stark still was, in spite of all he had suffered and endured.

The best thing he could do in such a case was, never to see Mrs. Lyk again; but as long as he lived in the same place that she did, this was for several reasons quite impracticable; and therefore, in order to carry into effect the plan which he had before but indistinctly surmised to be the



best, he determined to leave his native place altogether, and the sooner the better.

But, as we before observed, of this strongest and really decisive motive he was not himself clearly conscious; he would have ventured his life upon it, that it was nothing else upon earth, but the whimsical, insupportable old man, who drove from his home, and turned upon the wide world, a meritorious and only son, who had for so many years toiled for him and for the family. But the sincere grief which he felt, when he reflected upon the censure of the world, and on the extraordinary embarrassment and distress which it would cause his father, was in his eyes an unequivocal proof of the native goodness of his heart: however, the old gentleman would not have it otherwise, and the son had no alternative.

## CHAPTER VI.



THE only person of the family who had, if not a full knowledge, at least a tolerably correct idea, of the state of the young gentleman's heart, was his brother-in-law, Doctor Herbst. He had attended the late Mr. Lyk. in his last illness, in quality of family physician; he knew, that on account of some commercial differences, there had existed a great enmity between him and the younger Stark, and he had himself been instrumental to the very affecting reconciliation which took place, before the death of the former. At this reconciliation young Mr. Stark gave his solemn promise to the dying man, that, in the event of his demise, he would assist his widow as well by his advice as by every means in his

power, and above all would endeavour to arrange his commercial affairs, which Mr. Lyk confessed to be in a state of no small confusion. This generous promise had been fulfilled by Mr. Stark with the greatest zeal and punctuality. During whole months, he had devoted every moment he could contrive to spare from his own business, to the affairs of the widow; and on more than one occasion, when the doctor had come late in the evening to call on the lady, whose health had become very delicate, he had found his brother-in-law deeply absorbed in arranging ledgers. At these visits he had remarked, that the extraordinary virtues and amiable qualities of Mrs. Lyk, which her present melancholy situation afforded so many opportunities of displaying, and to which he himself did ample justice, had made some impression upon the heart of his relative. Above all, he had been struck with the confusion and lively vexation with which young Mr. Stark had once received an admonition not to fall in love, which he had thrown out quite

innocently and in a tone of raillery ; this, added to his pressing entreaties not for heaven's sake to drop the least hint to the family, and still less to his father, respecting his acquaintance with Mrs. Lyk, an acquaintance which, after all, he, the doctor, had been the means of forming, tended to throw a still stronger light upon the subject.

But however certain a proof of love the doctor might derive from this concentration of timidity, zeal, and mystery, according to his *Semiotica*,—to use a professional phrase,—he was far from dreaming that this love had already taken so deep a root, as to have any influence on the determination which, to his very great surprise and sorrow, his brother-in-law now avowed. Mr. Stark also demanded secrecy with respect to this resolution ; but it was a request which the doctor formally refused ; on the contrary, he immediately availed himself of the active assistance of his wife and mother-in-

law, to prevent the young gentleman from taking a step, so rash and so derogatory to the whole family. That this project was meditated in good earnest he could no longer doubt, after all he had seen and heard, and particularly after the perusal of certain letters, which on this occasion Mr. Stark produced.

But all the persuasions which himself and the ladies employed, to make young Mr. Stark renounce his resolution, were ineffectual.

To the arguments of Doctor Herbst he opposed others; to the entreaties and tears of his mother, the warmest assurances of love and obedience in all things, this single point excepted; and to the alternate caresses and raileries of his sister, indifference and bluntness of behaviour. It was soon remarked by these confederate powers, that the more they strove to soften and bend him to their views, the more obstinately and in-

flexibly did he persist in his opinion; and it was therefore determined in a secret family council, held between mother, daughter, and son-in-law, to choose an entirely different mode of attack, and since nothing could be effected in regard to the son, to try their good fortune with the father. They felt persuaded, that upon the first friendly entreaty of the father, the son would easily be induced to give up a resolution, by which he could not fail to be the greatest sufferer. They acknowledged too, that the magisterial tone, and the ironical humour of the old gentleman, were at times quite intolerable; that a son arrived at years of discretion, ought to be treated very differently to a boy or a youth; that every man had his individual cast of mind, which, indeed, in some of its less important qualities, might be guided, or modified, but which, taken altogether, and in the essentials, could never be altered. They had also their hopes, that the old gentleman himself, with his wonted equity

and good sense, would easily be convinced of this truth.

However, doubts soon arose respecting the facility of convincing old Mr. Stark. He had given too many proofs of obstinacy and inflexibility of character. It was, therefore, resolved that they should make their attack not in too over-hasty a manner, but with circumspection and method. The observations upon which they founded their plan, were the following: the old gentleman entertained the highest opinion of the understanding, and the sound judgment of the doctor; he was therefore to appear the first, in order to break to the father the resolution of his son, and to persuade him, respectfully, but with firmness, of the necessity as well as the justice of a change in his behaviour.—The word of the mother had at all times had very considerable weight in the affairs of the family, and frequently before, though never in so critical a

case as the present, her pressing representations had prevailed, and finally borne down all opposition. She therefore was to follow the doctor, and when the reason of her husband began to waver, she was to break down all resistance, and carry his heart by entreaties, and even by tears. With respect to the daughter, it was well known, that by her insinuating manner and lively sallies of wit, she possessed a wonderful influence over her father, and through the great similarity of her mind to his own, knew well how to follow all the turns and windings of his humour, and, in almost every instance, to make him retract, and embrace her own views. The daughter therefore was to appear the last, and give the already fatigued and exhausted obstinacy of the old gentleman, the final *coup de grace*.

The plan being thus cleverly concerted, the mother was the only one who expressed any apprehensions; the doctor under divine assis-



tance was perfectly convinced of a happy issue, and the daughter, all joy and confidence, declared that there was nothing—provided it was lawful and honourable—to which she should not by her caresses and entreaties, be able to persuade her dear, old, kind father. But she thought that there was no time to be lost in commencing the attack, for that her brother had begun to make several very significant preparations, all of which bespoke a fast approaching departure; added to this, the yearly ledger-accounts had just been closed, and doubtless this was a moment, which of all others, the son would judge most favourable for a separation from his father. The acuteness of this observation, which had escaped the notice of the others, was acknowledged and applauded; and accordingly it was unanimously determined to begin the work boldly and resolutely the following morning.

## CHAPTER VII.

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MR. STARK was seated at a table covered with money of various kinds, which he was counting and sorting out. Dr. Herbst entered the room; Mr. Stark hastened to count over the money which he had in his hand, and then bade his son-in-law a friendly and cheerful welcome. He first inquired about his health, and immediately after about that of his little ones.

“They are busy at home over their books,” said the doctor.

“Bravo! they begin early, and no doubt will make great progress!—And is there a real inclination? Have they the head for it?”

“Both, as far as I can judge; heretofore I feel satisfied with my children.”

“And so do I! so do I!—Alas! if it were not for these dear little ones! Should I not be a poor man with all this trash?”—and at these words he pointed contemptuously to the money on the table.—“For whom should I have toiled and saved? As for my son, that spendthrift”—

“It is precisely of him, my best of fathers, that I wish to speak to you,” said the doctor interrupting him.

“With all my heart.—Proceed if you please.”

“But you must hear me with patience.”

“I will. I have both patience and time.”

“You are prejudiced against your son.

You constantly throw all the blame of his faults on him alone.—Is it not possible that there may be another, who participates in them?"

"Another?—It would be difficult for me to guess this person. Who is it?"

"Why there is no one who knows him better than yourself. An excellent man; good and just in every other respect.—Only to mention one thing, and precisely that which you dislike the most in your son: is it entirely his own fault, that he still remains single?"

"Why? Is it any fault of mine then?"

"A little, I think."

"Oh to be sure! and if you think it over a little more, quite and entirely my fault.—For instance, that woman, whom to our sorrow, we

daily see fluttering about the town;—that woman who has thousands, and is squandering thousands, who never misses a ball or a masquerade, who is an adept at cards and love intrigues, who is indifferent both to her husband and child; in short, my dear doctor, a wife bred according to the modern system of fashionable education, and who perhaps at last, —I sicken at the thought,—to the shame and disgrace of the whole family, will have her name brought into court;—such a wife he fain would have taken, from his heart he would. Could I consent to it? Could I authorise him to rush with open eyes upon his destruction? When I have said to him; look yonder, my son, there is a fine, modest, quiet girl, the child of honest and worthy parents; possessing indeed but little—perhaps nothing, but brought up in the fear of the Lord, and in simplicity of heart—take her! and she will be grateful to you; she will love you, love your children, and bring them up in such a manner, that God

and men will rejoice at them; she will save you more thousands than another would bring you.—Well, when I argued in this manner, did I succeed?—Did he not stand before me hanging his under-lip, and with a face as sheepish as a simpleton.”

“ You are right—perfectly right!”

“ Very well then?”

“ But, presuming you were in the right in every thing, in every imaginable respect,—yet in one single instance, I do not know that you are.”—He uttered this in a very modest and almost timid tone.

“ I should like to know what that is?”

“ The way in which you treat him. The manner in which you speak to him early and late.”

“ Hem ! But I am not above being taught ; I listen to advice.—What would you have my manner to be ? ”

“ More loving, more father-like, if I may venture to make use of such an expression.”

“ And is it really then harsh ? Is it violent ? ”

“ Of the two I would rather that it were so. For who would not willingly forgive a little violence, harshness, or obstinacy, in a father, and in so good a father ? ”

“ Forgive ! Come, that’s very good ! ”

“ Only it must be followed by kindness, sincerity, love, and confidence !—But your bitter, your cutting tone”—

Here the old gentleman beginning to fidget about his wig, the doctor found it advisable to

administer some softening potion, and said :  
“ You must not take it amiss ; I know it does not become me to speak thus, but in so doing, I repose entirely on your indulgence.—Your eternal raileries and innuendos, which like a succession of little strokes given constantly on the same place, may, though each individual blow, is gentle in itself, become quite insupportable ; in short, your teasing, your taunting attacks” —

“ Enough ! enough !” said the old gentleman, “ nothing can be said against this. You are in the right.”

“ And may I therefore flatter myself with the hope” —

“ Of what ? of what ?” exclaimed Mr. Stark, looking at him with his eyes so widely opened, that they quite confounded the doctor.—“ That



I at *my* time of life should change my nature? that an old, knotty, mutilated trunk should become supple and pliant? That is impossible, good doctor, impossible!"

The doctor whose intentions had been so good, and whose manner so subdued, now grew vexed in his turn.—

"You are already beginning your usual tone."

"Already say you? And that with you doctor, whom I am far from wishing to tease?" —He pronounced the word *tease* with an emphasis quite peculiar.—"Well, then you see of yourself, that it is impossible, quite impossible for me to change. But, however, I pity my son; and an idea at this moment strikes me, I really think a good, a very good idea,—but which you alone could carry into effect."

“ I alone ? ”

“ Yes ; you have this very instant proved your great talent for it.”

“ How am I to understand you ? what talent ? ”

“ Yes, your happy talent in remarking faults, and speaking of them without reserve. What, if you were at once to go to my son, and begin by exposing to him his faults ?—For that he has his faults, I will be bound for—faults, downright solid faults !—Suppose you were to go to him and say : You must not take it amiss—I know it does not become me to speak thus,—but in so doing I repose entirely on your indulgence.—Either thus, or any way else you may chuse to turn it ; for you know best, my dear doctor, how to gild your pill.”

“ It is all very well ! ” exclaimed the latter, and bit his lip with vexation.

“In short, if you were to say to him; I have had the proposed interview with the old man. What an odd, obstinate, inflexible old fellow he is! How stubborn, how stiff-necked! He would rather break than bend. But what if you, the younger man were to try to get rid of those faults which are so very obnoxious to the peevish old gentleman; if for instance you would become a more settled man, a better economist, a more attentive merchant? I will pledge you my honour—and dear doctor, here is my hand, that you shall not repent of your words—I will pledge you my honour, that the old gentleman would behave in quite a different manner. My son should no longer have reason to complain of my satirical turn; he would find a father who would feel no greater solicitude in his heart, than how to render happy the only heir of his house and of his name.”—

Mr. Stark turned again to his table and took up one of the bags of money.—“Think

this over at your leisure. It is a friendly proposal."

"I see very well," said the doctor, who could scarcely conceal his vexation any longer, "that there is nothing to be done with you."

"Have you found it out at last?—Many others have done so before you. With respect to men acting according to principle, it will generally be found so."

"As that is the case, I must speak out without disguise. You will be shocked; but—your son"—

"My son?"

"Means to leave you for good!"

The old gentleman had at this moment taken up a piece of money, which did not appear

to be quite good. He examined it closely, turned it repeatedly over, rang it on the table, and at length laid it aside.—“ There are some bad ones among them ; 'tis very disagreeable. Thirteen, fourteen, fifteen.—Leave me, said you? and where is he going ?”

“ You take it very coolly. But possibly you think it a mere pretext, an artifice.—If so, I assure you upon my honour, that he is about to leave you ; he is going to Bremen, never to return.”

“ Is he indeed?—Ha, ha, ha, ha !”

“ You laugh.”

“ Why it is really very laughable.”

“ Now by heavens I do not find it so !”

“ But I do. My dear, dear son ! How could you suppose him to be in earnest ?”

"And why not?"

"Because it is nothing but a most miserable, paltry act of defiance."

"I fear you will soon think otherwise.—It is not the first time he entertained such an idea. It is an old notion that has often crossed his mind, and easy as it was for me in the beginning to check him, I have since found it a matter of no small difficulty."

"Very naturally! Because you made too much ado about it, and took too serious notice of it in the beginning."

"But I tell you, that now he is really going. Attend to me, my dear father. He is going and then—what will the world say of it? Your son is known not to be a bad-hearted man, and I am sure you would be the last person

in the world to say otherwise.—You will be obliged to trust your business to strangers. You are too old, and have too many other affairs upon your hands, to be able to keep your eye upon these also.—Your wife too, only think how miserable the loss of her only son will make her—nor her alone, but yourself—all of us!—”

“Nonsense! nonsense!” exclaimed the old gentleman, and went on counting his money.

“If you see it in this light—”

“In what other should I?”

“I have done my duty, and must now be silent.”

“My dear son!” said Mr. Stark, turning round, and laying his spectacles aside, as if

preparing for a serious conversation; "your reasons are good and excellent; but for whom do they tell?—If the world knows *him* to be no bad-hearted man,—I hope I may venture to say, that it knows me to be a good-hearted one. Upon whom then will the most blame, the most reprehension, fall?—If the business goes to ruin, who is it will have to suffer the loss? I, the old man, who have enjoyed my share of happiness, and now approach rapidly to the tomb; or, he, the youth, whose enjoyments are to come, and who might so easily have them if he would."

This latter allusion, which had escaped him quite accidentally, tickled the old gentleman's fancy, and had the effect of restoring him to his usual good humour.

"What? what?" continued he, with a sort of comical anger, "a fellow who has not the



courage to buckle to a wife, to have hardi-  
hood enough to run from his home, to  
establish himself on his own hands? to leave  
all his comforts behind him?—Oh, nonsense!  
nonsense!"

## CHAPTER VIII.

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MRS. STARK, who had already been for some time punctual at her post, thinking the conversation had taken an unfavourable turn, entered the room. Her motherly heart was overflowing, and keeping her handkerchief before her eyes, she addressed her husband:—

“ Are you there, my dear?”

“ She too ?” said the old man to himself, and with his usual penetration, he already began to anticipate the arrival of his daughter too.—  
“ Yes, here I am, good dame.” He rose up and went to meet her in his usual good-natured manner.

'This good-natured manner not a little discomposed Mrs. Stark, who, after the proposal of the doctor would have been much more satisfied at finding him peevish and out of humour.—“ Oh,” said she, “ I see full well that all my entreaties will as usual be in vain.”

“ And why? Do you think so because I am in a friendly mood?—Well, I almost fear so myself, when I see you in tears.—In truth, living together some forty years, makes people pretty well acquainted with each other.—I know very well, that when you feel you are in the right, you come to me full of confidence and with a brow all cheerfulness; all I have then to do is to maintain my usual equanimity; but when you are conscious of being in the wrong, then you lament the ill consequence which you foresee, and then I become kind and friendly in order to sooth and comfort you.—Let us have a trial of this immediately; what is the matter?”

"Your son is about to leave you. He is determined to go;" sobbed forth Mrs. Stark, from a heart overflowing with genuine grief.

"Determined, say you?—Well, you know he is no longer a boy; he is a man now."

"True! Very true! But on that very account——"

"Right!—On that very account, he must know what is best for himself."

"But, alas! must we lose him?"

"It is a thing not to be helped. Some must enter the world some time or other."

"If you would but speak one word to him, if you would but for once be kind to him, if you would give him your word——"

“What? How is this?—Now you see, good dame, you see how right you were in shedding these tears!—So; I should give him my word?—Him?—And for what reason, pray?—The young man, I well see, is become mighty lofty and overbearing; he is annoyed at having so close and watchful an observer, so troublesome a monitor, about him; nothing would give him greater satisfaction than to stop that mouth out of which he hears so many disagreeable truths; he devises little schemes to inspire me with fear, to keep me in awe; he wishes—to use the homely phrase—to lead me by the nose. He has just matured a little ingenious plan for effecting this; and there you come, my dear, entreating me with tears in your eyes to hold down my nose for this laudable purpose.—Tell me, good woman, is this right? is it reasonable?”

“You hear all this!” exclaimed the old lady, stretching her hand and her handkerchief towards the doctor.—“It is thus that he has

always treated me; such the esteem, such the value he sets upon me! Thus it is that I have ever been made to look little and contemptible!"

Mr. Stark entreated her to be silent, for he detested from his very soul all whining, and could not bear to listen to nonsense; but he entreated in vain, and was himself bidden to be silent in his turn. At length he recollected that he was deaf of one ear, and had only to draw his wig snugly over the other: this he did without delay, and returned quietly to his business.

## CHAPTER IX.

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"WHERE are you?" asked Mrs. Herbst, popping in her head at the door.—"My stars! All of you with papa?—Good morning, good morning."

"So early?" said the old gentleman, "before noon?"

"I had some purchases to make, and had to pass the house. I could not but drop in to bid a good morning to my dear papa.—I know he is fond of seeing me. Is he not?"

"Surely there is no question of that."

"Had I not come in so perfectly by chance,

I should have brought one of my little ones with me; and the best and most industrious of the whole lot, be assured.—I kiss your hand in the name of all of them.”

“ I thank you ! I thank you.”—He looked at her somewhat doubtingly, but not unkindly.—  
“ You seem anxious to be particularly friendly to-day.”

“ *Seem*, my dear papa ? I am what I seem to be.”

“ And have you seen none of the present company before this, to-day—not your husband ?”

“ Oh, yes, at breakfast.”

“ Not your mother ?”—Mrs. Herbst told a fib by a shake of the head, in order not to do it by a distinct *no*.—“ But then, my child, is it kind in you not to have kissed her hand ?”



" Pardon, my dearest mother!" said Mrs. Herbst, whilst she turned, and laughing in her sleeve, kissed her mother's hand.

" And your brother,—of course, you have not seen him either?"

" Yes, I saw him, dear father, but did not exchange a syllable with him. He passed me, hurrying through the passage with a face! such a face!—Well! thought I, what are your faces to me? Hurry along!—Nothing can put me out of humour, for you know very well, father, that I am in all respects your daughter."

" Are you?" said the old gentleman, and laughed with inward satisfaction.

" Yes, papa, I am always cheerful, in good spirits, and ready to contribute my mite of amusement. He who is not so in return, may keep his whims to himself; or if I deign to notice

them, it is only to laugh at him. That gentleman yonder," added she, pointing with her finger towards the doctor, "has found this out by experience."

"You silly thing!" said the doctor, "and do you mean to say, that I have any whims?"

"To be sure you have; you are but a man. —But, my dear father, after all, I am very sorry to see my brother always so melancholy. I wish with all my heart that he was happy. —For my own part, if I could contribute to render him so, there is nothing in the world that I would not do."

"Indeed? There is nothing you would not do?—I see it, I see it!—" He rose and placed the bags of money aside.

"Where are you going, dear father?"

"I have done all I had to do here."

“ But could you not stay a little longer ?”

“ For what purpose ?”—He cast a sidelong, penetrating and significant look on her, and shaking his finger in a menacing way, exclaimed ; “ Oh woman ! woman ! You had spoken with your husband ; you had spoken with your mother ; you had spoken with your brother !”

“ What, do you mean to say to-day ? here in this house ?—No, indeed I have not spoken a word either with my husband or with my brother.”

“ But with your mother ; you confess that.”

“ Well ? Was there any harm in it ?,”

“ Oh, no harm.—Only that you come to solicit the very same thing she has done, though of course under another mode of address, What she set forth so tragically, you are come

to *touch off* in a comic style.—Go your ways, go your ways! The others I could dispatch, but you—”

“ You dare not? Is it not so?”

“ And with reason too.—For look you, when *you* solicit, all your little ones solicit with you, and that is really too much for me;—go your ways!”

“ Say you so? then you shall certainly not escape this time; or if you are determined on going, I will run after you.—Dear, good, best of fathers—”

“ You coaxing hussey!”

“ Coaxing? oh, there is no need of that, except when you are not to be moved.”

“ Well then, what do you want? Here, take

whatever you wish.”—He took a bag of money in each hand, and held them towards her.

“No, no! It is not that. I will not touch a single farthing of that.”

“And yet you would have me commit a folly, for which I would afterwards give twice, three times as much, not to have done it.”

“A folly, did you call it? Good heavens! as if it were a folly to be for once very kind, very loving!—You are so to *me*! so very, very good;—be then for my sake the same to my brother!—For my sake—for by this you will relieve me from the most painful feelings I could possibly endure.—He envies me—I have remarked it repeatedly;—he has a variety of little suspicions arising from an idea that I abuse your extreme kindness; and really, to judge from mere appearances—he is not without his reasons for it. For does he not call you father as well as

myself, though he possesses so much less of your love?"

"*He* is your mother's pet—you are mine—it is quite in the regular way."

"Nay, nay! Let me beg, let me entreat of you not to allow him to go; do not let him leave us!"

"Can *I* retain him?"

"With one single kind word."

"Humph!—And do you think, that a father must give that to his son?"

"A kind word is a friendly word, it is no entreaty.—Indeed he possesses much sensibility, much gratitude. He only waits for the first opening of your fatherly heart, and you will find him the best son in the world.—Ah, should he be in-

duced to think that I profited of his absence to do him wrong? That I wheedled from you for myself, and for my little ones, that to which neither of us have, in fact, any right whatever, but to which he has as good a claim as myself?—You know that this is not the case, and that I am quite incapable of such a thing; but still he would believe it, he certainly would believe it; and then my heart—” Here the tears started from her eyes.

These proofs of delicacy of feeling, sisterly love, and disinterestedness, the sincerity of which was above all suspicion, were in the highest degree gratifying to the old gentleman, and he surveyed her with a look of great tenderness. He thought he beheld in her not only his flesh and blood, but his very heart and soul.

“Dearest, best of fathers,” resumed she, collecting all her powers, to throw into her

voice its sweetest and most flattering tone, and into her features the most insinuating and winning expression,—“all my little children solicit with me. Can you refuse?”

“Well, well!” said Mr. Stark, repeatedly passing his fingers over his grey, moistening eye-lashes,—“well, if I must, I must. I will speak to him.”

“For certain?”

“Yes, for sure!—As kindly as ever I did in my life.”

“And soon?”

“As soon as it can be done conveniently. Within a day or so.”

“Pledge me your hand to it.”



"There! take it.—As kindly as ever I did in my life."

"But why do you smile so to yourself? What am I to understand by that?"

"Oh! only at my own thoughts.—Let that pass."—He had already before his mind the manner in which he was to fulfil his promise, and he continued smiling, till he reached the door.

"Poor fellow!" said he, as he passed the doctor, "you have been sadly imposed upon. You asked me for a wife, and I have given you a very serpent."

## CHAPTER X.

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"WHAT say you now?" exclaimed Mrs. Herbst triumphantly, the moment her father had quitted the room; "was I not right in what I told you, dear mother? Was there any need of giving ourselves such trouble and alarm about this affair?"

"And you believe it all over, do you?" said the doctor.

"Perfectly so. My father will be as good as his word."

"But he should have promised more.—  
However, supposing your point to be carried,

and that, for this time, your brother consents to remain—”

“ For this time? And why not for ever?”

“ Will he be capable of renouncing his follies? will your father lay aside his obstinacy?”

“ Never! never!” said the mother with a deep sigh.

“ It is not very likely,” rejoined the daughter.

“ Well then, what ground have we gained? —We sought to remove the internal causes of the discord, strove to stop up the sources of the evil; and not having succeeded in this, we begin by applying emollients and healing plasters to an ulcer, which, if we bring it to close to-day, will break out afresh to-morrow.—That is a wrong method of curing,” added he, shaking his head, “ from which I withdraw my hand in time, and leave the responsibility entirely to you.”

"Very learned and very sage!" replied his wife, "but even a charlatan may sometimes be successful. Only leave it to me."

"But what, if we could effect a master-cure?"

"A master-cure?—What do you mean?"

He paced up and down the room, with a look of dissatisfaction, repeatedly rubbing his forehead.—"No, no; it can never be; it is nothing but a pious wish—nothing more. Your brother should marry. He should take a modest, sensible, affectionate wife."

"Just such a one as you have got? Is it not so?" said Mrs. Herbst, whilst with a smile at once full of archness and affection, she peeped up into her husband's face.

"Well, well; if it were merely such a one—"

"Oh, you rogue!—"

He held out his hand tenderly towards her, and drew her to his heart.—“Such a wife would attach him to his home, and to his business, for she would be there; it would give him a distaste for all the pleasures he is now hunting after; for with her he would find more rational, more refined enjoyment; it would inspire him with a disrelish for the insipid follies of dress and fashion; for a man does not make his toilet for his domestic circle, but for the world.”

This speech met with the greatest applause. His wife clung fondly about him, and the mother-in-law praised him to the skies.

“Thus would all the sources of discontent be closed at once. Our good father and all of us should feel satisfied.—Indeed, if it were possible,” added he, with a sort of enthusiasm, whilst he paced up and down the room with great vivacity,—“if it were possible that he and the widow—that worthy widow—”

The words had scarcely parted from his lips, when the two ladies flew towards him, and held both their faces so close to his, that he stepped back in perfect alarm. "What is it? What have I said?" exclaimed he.

"The widow!" cried both of them, as it were with one and the same breath. "Did you not mention a widow, dear son?"—"Did you not speak of a widow, my dear?"

The doctor was not a little mortified at having thus betrayed his secret, and he used all his efforts and ingenuity to recall his words, but all to no purpose. He was however determined to stop where he was, and to part with no more of it. But so warmly was he pressed by the incessant questions of his wife, backed by his mother-in-law, that he could not help here and there letting drop a part of it; and at length they had made so much of it their own, that he thought

he might as well gain a truce from them by spontaneously giving up the unimportant remainder. Besides, they promised with such earnestness to guard the secret, and the mother and daughter required such formal and solemn guarantees from each other for so doing, that at length he could resist no longer.

When, however, the ladies came to examine their secret, they found they had gained very little by it. The widow had a family—had no fortune—was not very young—she had certainly passed her twenty-fourth or twenty-fifth year;—the lover appeared by no means decided in his choice;—the father had his prejudices against the widow, and to overcome such prejudices had been at all times very difficult, not to say impossible. All these circumstances did not lead them to hope for a marriage, however warm and sincere the young man's attachment might be, and still less could they expect from such a marriage a

firm foundation for the tranquillity and happiness of the family. They therefore felt just as much embarrassed as before.

Mrs. Herbst, however, comforted herself with the common-place reflection, that man should not grieve about the future, and that he ought to be satisfied, if his more immediate prospects were neither gloomy nor overcast; that a perfect peace was indeed the most desirable object; but that even a truce—and this, at all events, she hoped she had effected for the family—was not to be despised.



## CHAPTER XI.



IN the evening, at supper, the courage of Mrs. Herbst sustained a considerable shock from a single look given by her father. It was Thursday, a day when, according to the established custom of the house, the whole of the family of the Herbsts, even down to the youngest grandchild, assembled at the old gentleman's, who on these occasions was usually very cheerful and talkative. He generally opened the conversation by different enquiries about such of the doctor's patients as he knew, though merely by sight, and in whom he took an interest, partly from such a kind of acquaintance, and partly as they were customers of his son-in-law.

On this occasion he enquired particularly about a Mr. Heil, a middle-aged man, who had a large family.

“ Oh, he,” said the doctor, “ he is already quite out of danger.”

“ Indeed? This is very good news to me!—That man has had many misfortunes; he can have but very little left, and what would have become of all those dear children?—Besides he is such an honest, such an upright man—he has never been out of my head night or day.—But—if I do not mistake—it was but the day before yesterday you told me, he was the worst on your whole list, and that you felt quite uneasy about him.”

“ He was then at a very dangerous point. He lay in a crisis.”

“ A crisis !—Pray what is the real meaning

of this word, which is now in such general use?"

"It is a Greek word, dear father."

"It would not mend the matter, if it were Arabic. I wish to know the sense of it. You learned gentlemen call every thing by outlandish names; what is the use of this? A German distemper, forsooth, will have no Greek fits."

"And yet fits, which could not be expressed so concisely as in Greek. A crisis in a burning fever is the name given to the last and strongest exertion of nature, to terminate the disease by sufficiently expelling the concocted matter of illness."—

"Concocted matter of illness!" repeated the old gentleman, moving his head backwards and forwards, "that is German with a vengeance!"

"German like Greek ; is it not?"

"Why, nearly so."

"I will explain this more clearly. We say that the matter of illness is *concocted*, when it has become so far separated from the sound saps with which it had been mixed, that the body is enabled to free itself therefrom, or if it cannot do so completely, to rid itself of it in part, by expelling it at some external part of the body.—If nature has still strength enough to effect this operation, the patient recovers ; if not, he dies. As long as this struggle of nature lasts, the patient is said to be in his *crisis*."

"Just so!—Now it becomes clear ; now I understand, doctor.—Thus, a man may be dangerously ill during his crisis, though he is getting better by it."

"Certainly.—During the whole time the

matter is thus concocting, and the crisis becomes thereby prepared—you understand me.”

“ Oh, perfectly.”

“ During the whole of this time the disease is increasing, and a little before the crisis, it is usual for alarming and violent fits to take place, which bring the evil to the highest pitch, and which may properly be called the *critical tumult*.”

“ God preserve us ! ” exclaimed the old gentleman, who once in his life had witnessed a very critical tumult in his native town, and who startled at the word.

“ No, sir ; God help us, we ought to say.”

“ How say you ? God help us to a tumult ?  
—But right ; when it is too late to save, we do well to pray for help.—And then this help comes through the doctor’s means ? Is it not so ? ”

"The doctor can do but little, very little for it. The greatest and best part, nature herself must effect."

"Indeed!—But still the doctor takes his fee; and therefore I should think it a part of his duty to be ready at hand, to throw bountifully into the tumult every thing he is able to muster up—powders, mixtures, and whatever else there may be, in order to restore a speedy peace."

All present—except the son, who sat lost in thought—laughed at this conceit, and the doctor more heartily than all the rest.

"You would make an excellent physician, dear father! Do you know, that by your too lively activity, you would disturb the crisis, and thereby bring the patient to his grave?"

"Indeed? I should not like that. Poor Mr. Heil!"

"An interrupted crisis is always followed by a sudden death or by dangerous, and in the end, fatal transitions, which we designate by the Greek term *Meta*—"

Before he could finish the word, Mr. Stark interrupted him: "Enough, enough! No more Greek if you please.—I see how it is, you professional gentlemen make yourselves very easy over these matters; you cover your patient well up, and stand with folded arms, watching what nature is about."

"Why, really I must confess, it does not amount to much more than this."

"Well if this be the surest and safest way, it is best as it is."—

He now sat for a few moments lost in thought and playing with his plate.— "I am very glad," resumed he, "to have had this opportunity of

learning how a critical tumult ought to be treated. I was just on the point of committing an egregious blunder."

"How so?" said the doctor.

"I had almost been seduced into the experiment of attempting a cure in the midst of the crisis."

"You?" exclaimed the doctor.

The old gentleman remained silent; but one significant look, accompanied by a smile, which he cast not exactly on his son, but towards the side of the table where he was sitting, left the three confederate powers no doubt that the observation was to allude to the situation of his son: but it still remained a riddle to know how he intended to treat him under these circumstances.

After supper they guessed and guessed, but



all their guessing rather excited than satisfied their anxious curiosity. At length, Mrs. Herbst, who in a certain sense was the oracle of the family, and whose authority by this morning's victory, had acquired still greater weight, proposed with much good sense not to trouble themselves any farther about the affair for the present, but quietly to await the proper explanation which the father's conduct would afford. This proposal was readily acceded to, both by the mother and the husband, for it was quite obvious, that this could afford the only perfectly clear and satisfactory explanation.

## CHAPTER XII.

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YOUNG Mr. Stark had now, with the exception of packing up, finished the different preparations for his departure. The only thing that still embarrassed him, was the manner in which he should take his leave. To quit clandestinely his paternal roof, where he was conscious of leaving no other recollection than that of his good services, never once entered his mind. His heart also imposed upon him the obligation, ere he quitted, of respectfully and tenderly thanking his father for the many proofs of affection, which he had received at his hands. He had imagined a sort of

address to the old gentleman, which was to prove to him, as well the firmness and immutability of his resolution, as his honest and filial sentiments as a son, whom he so cruelly drove from his home. The expressions by which he principally hoped to attain the latter object, were the most select he was able to find; and whilst he was engaged in putting them together, a good many tears trickled from his eyes, which were so far genuine tears of joy, as he felt them to be the most undeniable proofs of the goodness of his heart. In the meantime, while these preparations were going on, the young man grew continually more anxious and uneasy, and the more vividly did the venerable features of his parent pourtray themselves to his imagination. However he mustered up all his courage, and presented himself before his father; but upon his attempting to deliver his address, it not only went off most awkwardly, but had the effect of not a little alarming the old gentleman.

The first words of the speech: "My dear father," were uttered tolerably well, and a man of somewhat more acute hearing than Mr. Stark, might have understood them; but after this our orator went on in such a way, stammering, trembling, and turning pale, that the old gentleman, who had no suspicion of the cause of all this, sprang from his seat, full of the greatest anxiety, caught his son firmly by the arm, and by calling loudly for assistance, threw the whole house into alarm. The trembling which on this occasion seized the old man in his turn, the haste and solicitude with which he himself administered some suitable medicine, going himself to look for what was necessary for this purpose, his incessant and tender enquiries, how his dear son felt, and what had brought on this fit, touched young Mr. Stark to the quick, and made it quite impossible for him to mention a single word of the real state of the case. He rather confirmed a surmise thrown out by his father, that his having partaken too plentifully of a favourite dish at dinner, had

occasioned this indisposition; and he quietly submitted to a long and forcible lecture upon moderation and temperance.

Young Mr. Stark now felt convinced, that the oral method would not do, he therefore determined to try the effect of writing, and to give his letter, immediately before entering the carriage, into the hands of Mr. Schlicht. This Mr. Schlicht was an old invalid clerk, who as his memory and sight had become a good deal impaired, filled the place of a sort of steward in Mr. Stark's house, and was always ready to perform all the little commissions of the family; and who, in spite of his whimsical ways, possessed in a high degree, the confidence of the parents, and still more so, that of the children.

But there was another painful leave to be taken, which Mr. Stark could not possibly do otherwise than in person; because after so intimate a connection as had existed between

them, writing would have appeared by far too cold ;—we allude to the widow.

This excellent person found herself just at this moment in a most embarrassing situation. An importunate and merciless creditor, whose demand on the house of Lyk was indeed but unimportant, insisted on an immediate payment; but disbursements had already been made to other creditors to an amount too considerable to render a direct payment possible. The widow knew that after all her lawful demands had been paid, and her debts by these means completely discharged, there would remain but little for her own support and that of her children; she also knew, that even this little would be unavoidably lost, and the shame of a public bankruptcy be added to the misery of poverty, if the example of but one creditor encouraged the rest to rush altogether and without mercy, upon her. The most natural course to pursue, in order to extricate herself.

from these troubles, was to address herself to her kind friend, who was not only inclined by the goodness of his disposition, but bound by his word of honour, to services of this kind; she could feel no difficulty in so doing from the reflection, that the discovery of her embarrassments was itself a secret solicitation for active assistance, for nobody knew better than Mr. Stark, that nothing could be lost in advancing her a sum of money. She therefore sat down to solicit his friendly advice; but she could not bring herself to commit a single word to paper; a certain irresistible repugnance compelled her to rise from her desk. After several subsequent attempts she was unable to proceed.

At length the attention of the widow was very naturally directed from her external to her internal situation. She asked herself what could be the cause of a repugnance which could not have been occasioned by the conduct of her friend, for at all times he had been

goodness and complacency itself. Might not the real cause be mere delicacy, and a feeling, that it was a very bad return for the past services of a friend, to be ready on every occasion to ask for new favours? The consciousness of her own bosom convinced her, if not of the fallacy, at least of the insufficiency of this explanation. At length she was forced to an avowal, which, unobserved as she was by mortal eye, made her blush at the secret and unwelcome avowal, that she looked upon her friend with a somewhat more tender regard than that of mere friendship, and that if she felt so reluctant to appear before him in her needy condition, it was because she really loved him. Her self-love, however, seeking for an excuse, found the cause of this passion—which she was well aware she must combat to the utmost of her power,—not only pardonable, but even praiseworthy. Feelings of gratitude for the interest and affection which he had evinced to her little orphans, still more than for the many.



valuable, and never to be forgotten services rendered to herself, had ensnared a heart, at all times alive to the impulse of every good and noble sentiment.

Scarcely was this self-examination finished, when young Mr. Stark entered the room. His appearance spread over her features a timidity and an embarrassment, and imparted to her voice a softness and delicacy of expression, which could not fail to give her a tenfold charm in the eyes of a man already so partial to her. He enquired the reason of her looking so pale and indisposed; she stood with downcast eyes and a countenance full of confusion.—If any grief or care pressed upon her mind, he begged she would not keep it a secret from him; and entreated that, if he could render her any service, she would not refuse his offers. She thanked him with deep emotion, but without being able to prefer her pressing and important suit.—He now disclosed to her the

determination he had taken, and the object of his present visit, and regretted he should be so soon deprived of the happiness of offering his services in person. It was evident that she was very sensibly affected; she enquired the motives for such an unexpected determination, entreating him, if it could by any means be done, to desist from his intention, and when she found her solicitation proved fruitless, she with overflowing eyes accused her hard destiny, which after so many and such severe trials, had finally deprived her of her best, her only friend. —'The unfortunate circumstance with her creditor, which she could now no longer hope to see removed by Mr. Stark, and to which she had not the courage even distantly to allude, fearful that his present situation might not be without its difficulties, doubtless contributed very considerably to her present painful feelings; but as this circumstance was altogether unknown to Mr. Stark, he could not possibly account otherwise for her emotion, than by ascribing it

to her deep-felt gratitude, and her tender friendship. This supposition excited his own feelings to such a degree, that after many a fruitless attempt to stammer forth farewell, and after but one, but on that very account, warmer kiss on her hand, he was obliged to hurry abruptly away.

When he reached the street, he blessed the darkness of the hour, which permitted him to weep unobserved. He watched for some time before his father's house for a favourable moment to slip in without being observed; half undressed, he threw himself on his bed, and relieved his bursting heart by a flood of tears. Many a tender wish, many a flattering hope hovered around him; but at length, he succeeded in chasing them away, by the recollection of his past sufferings. And now it was that he evinced a power of will, a firmness of resolution, of which, considering the natural softness and pliability of his disposition, he had scarcely

believed himself capable. He rose suddenly, fetched his trunk, opened his drawers and closets, and covered all the chairs and tables with linen and articles of dress, in order to have them ready at hand for packing early in the morning.

No! said he to himself, while busily engaged in this manner, he who has not sufficient strength of mind to make a firm and immutable resolution, will always be, what he deserves to be—a slave. I have begun, and must go through with it.—Let my father now know what it is to have to do with strangers! Let him learn by experience the difference there is between a servant and a son! Let him learn this, and long for my return, as much as he pleases! He will never get me back again.—And have I then no duties to fulfil but towards him? None to myself?

## CHAPTER XIII.

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"NEVER mind, never mind!" said the old gentleman to Mr. Schlicht, who full of amazement, had just communicated the discovery he had made in the room of young Mr. Stark, and thought he had sufficient cause to bewail the misfortune of his old benefactor's house, if, by the son's absence, it should be deprived of its first and firmest support. He fancied it already hastening to decay on all sides, and ready to fall to ruins.

"There is no danger!" said Mr. Stark, sitting down to write a letter of unlimited credit for his son.

“No danger!” exclaimed Mr. Schlicht, who did not know whether he should be more astonished or vexed at the indifference of his master. “No danger, Mr. Stark? But only think”—

“Confound it!” said the old gentleman, “there! I must destroy the letter, which was almost finished, and begin another!—Can’t you be silent for a moment? Is chattering become a second nature to you?—”

It was among Mr. Schlicht’s peculiarities that he could never hear the words “silence,” or “chattering,” if spoken with reference to him, without getting sadly out of humour. He had in his younger years been a good deal tossed about in the world, and he had, as he often boasted in his odd way, “never kept his eyes in his pockets;” he knew very well, that if other people had gained experience and acquired penetration, so had he; and if a man like him

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was not entitled to liberty of speech, nobody was, and therefore that every body should hold his tongue. He turned round abruptly, and was about to make off, when Mr. Stark, who had just taken in his hand a bag of money, ordered him to wait, and attend him to his son, to see if there was any thing in which he could be of service.

The other members of the family, who had been informed by Mr. Schlicht of the discovery, previously to his disclosing it to Mr. Stark, were at that moment earnestly but fruitlessly engaged in combating the resolution of the young gentleman, when Mr. Stark entered the room, accompanied by the old clerk. His appearance in this remote apartment, which he had certainly not entered since the time the children were ill with the measles, filled them all with the liveliest curiosity, and the son with evident confusion. However, he composed himself as well as he could in the hurry of the

moment, in order to collect sufficient calmness to counteract the reproaches, or the representations of his father, forcibly as the latter might feel disposed to support them with the bag of money, which he held in his left hand.

"There is a great deal of luggage," said the old gentleman, whilst he cast his eyes on the chairs around, "and yet I see nothing but this single bit of a trunk. It is impossible that these things can ever be got into it."

"Then they must remain out of it,"—muttered old Schlicht, without being heard by the old gentleman, "since it is not larger."

"Have you no other, Schlicht? You will never be able to put more than a third of all these dresses into the one yonder. Why surely you could have seen as much with half an eye."

"Alas! Mr. Stark, I with my eyes see no-



thing but sorrow and woe in all these goings on."

"How so?—But come, don't be nonsensical, friend, but answer my question."

"Perhaps one might rummage out the old portmanteau, which you used to travel with some thirty or forty years ago. I remember it was then nearly in pieces."

The old gentleman could scarcely refrain from laughing.—"I don't know what the deuce is in you, Mr. Schlicht. Such beautiful, such expensive dresses—for you must see that this wardrobe could not be purchased for a thousand crowns or more—and you would pack them up in the old dirty portmanteau?"

"Not I; none of your packing for me!"

"Once more! Don't be nonsensical. Here,

friend ! Take some money with you, and go to the man opposite the Exchange. He has a shop-full of trunks of all sizes and descriptions ; there you may choose.—You can scarcely get it high and broad enough, only be careful that it is not too long.—The best thing would be to go first to the coach-house, and take measure of my chaise.”

“ Of what chaise ? ”

The old gentleman looked at him for a moment, and shook his head.—“ Certainly not the old broken one ! Nothing is left of that but the body.”

“ Well, I understand you ; of the new one which you bought for your last summer’s excursion.”

“ Right !—I will make a present of it to my son ; for it is only in my way. My travels are

all over.—And mind me, Mr. Schlicht, don't you forget to look well to every thing, to see if all is in good order; the leather and iron work, the wheels and axle-tree. I know of nothing more annoying than to be stopped short in the midst of one's journey by a broken-down carriage.—The chaise"—added he, in a tone expressive of discontent and reproof—"has been left standing in the dust the whole of the summer.—If I do not look to things, nobody else will."

"I wish it were in a thousand pieces!" muttered Mr. Schlicht, and left the room in a ten times worse humour than he had entered it. To be accused of want of attention to the house or any thing belonging to it, or to what in any way was under his inspection, was a thing quite insufferable to him. According to his own account of himself, a more faithful manager, a better economist, was not to be found in the world. As for the rest, he would not stir hand or foot,

to facilitate in the least the departure of his dear young master. For his part, let who would get the trunk, he would have nothing to do with it.

The old gentleman looked after him with a sad and pitying smile.—“How weak will old age sometimes make us!” said he, turning to the doctor. “This good honest fellow is so strongly attached to my son, that out of his mere attachment to him, he would rather see him die here at home, than make the most splendid fortune in any other place.—Thank heaven, I am of a firmer nature.—It is indeed most delightful, to have all one’s flesh and blood about one; but when this *cannot* be”—

“And why not? Why can it not be?” asked Mrs. Stark, who could no longer restrain her emotion.

“For more than one reason, my good dame.”

" May I hear them ?—Pray, tell me but one, but a single one."

" All, if you please.—I have no secrets."

" Well then ?"

" In the first place, because if he and I were to live here together any longer, we should do nothing but render each other's existence miserable."

" Heavens ! That is a misery indeed. But whose fault is it ?"

" Mine, of course.—In the second place, seeing that I have often reproached him with a want of resolution, and of the spirit of enterprise, it would appear very strange in me, if at the first proof of the contrary—be it what it may—I were to thwart his purpose ; in the last place, and which is the principal point, because the

establishment of a new commercial house will oblige him to such habits of activity, economy, and order, as I, with all my preaching, could never succeed in infusing into him. I hope he will now begin a new way of thinking, and that he will turn out just such a man, as I have at all times wished him to be."

"And your firm?"—continued the mother, in a somewhat lower tone of voice, "your business?"

"That is *my* affair, my dear, not your's. There can be no doubt but he who for so long a period has known how to conduct it properly, will not be at a loss how to do so for the time to come.—You had better think about what still remains for you to do."

"For me?—What can that be?"

"I hope, you will not let him depart in such

a cold manner? You will surely give him a farewell repast?—I hope you will come, dear doctor and you,”—looking at his daughter,—“and of course all your little appendages.”—He smiled on her in his usual kindly manner.—“Then we shall once more be all happy together, happy with all our hearts.”

“Happy? happy with all your heart?” said Mrs. Stark with a sigh, “and will you be able to be happy?”

“And why not? What in the world should prevent me?—The place he has chosen for his future residence, is so very near. Should our hearts long for him too painfully, well, all we have to do is to send for post horses, and off we are to see him!—It would be another matter if he were going to cross the sea, or were bound for America, China, or perhaps Botany Bay!”

"Heaven preserve us!" exclaimed Mrs. Stark.

"Amen! amen! But no more of your sighing. Enough of that.—You hear"—continued he, turning round to his son with composure and kindness—"that I know of your intentions, and that, all things considered, I do not exactly disapprove of them.—Go, my son, under the protection of heaven; you have my blessing on your undertaking.—Our first clerk, Mr. Burg, may now fill your place; you yourself know him to be an active, honest, and clever man: and, old as I am, I have still strength enough to work, and eyes to superintend. For *my* business therefore you need not be solicitous; but how will it be with *yours*? Every beginning, they say, is difficult, and all that you, with your many extra expenses, can possibly have laid aside, will not weigh too heavily on you.—Here, my son,"—placing at the same time the heavy bag of money,



which till now he had held under his left arm, upon the drawers, "here is a small acknowledgment for past services! I have for a long time had it ready for you, and only waited for the moment when it might prove most acceptable;—and methinks that moment is now arrived.—However, as you might still feel some wants; as some of our commercial friends might perhaps reflect on our unexpected separation, and deny you their farther confidence; here is a letter of unlimited credit, which, I trust, will supply all your wants, and remove every doubt from the minds of your friends."

The old gentleman ceased speaking, and seemed to wait for the due expressions of gratitude on the part of his son; but nothing followed on his side but a formal and awkward bow.—"But I am aware, my son, I have interrupted you in an occupation, in which we do not like to be disturbed, because it is a thing we

generally set about very unwillingly.—I will no longer detain you for the present. When you have done here, we shall have some farther conversation.”—

## CHAPTER XIV.

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WHEN the old gentleman had left the apartment, the confederates looked after him with very different feelings. The mother was full of grief and vexation, that her husband, instead of trying to retain her son, had only afforded him the means to facilitate his departure; the daughter was full of a sort of resentment and shame, that by means of the kind promise which had been given her, and which, in a certain sense, had been fulfilled, she had been so cleverly taken in; and the doctor full of silent admiration at the penetration and judgment which the father had displayed in forming an estimate of the character of his son. A single glance at the

latter was sufficient to enable one to form an idea of his whole interior. The light of his eyes, which were fixed in one unmeaning stare, seemed extinguished to the very last spark ; all firmness, all elasticity, seemed to have deserted his features, and his arms hung drooping at his side, like the branches of the weeping willow.

It was only when his mother and sister approached to express their feelings at his departure, that life suddenly returned to his benumbed and death-like limbs. He entreated, with averted eye, and out-stretched hand, that if they still retained a spark of affection for him they would leave him instantly. This entreaty was supported by nods and winks on the part of the doctor, who first led the way ; he saw that his brother-in-law was sinking beneath shame and mortification ; and shame he knew to be a feeling, under which we can willingly

dispense with witnesses, and still more so with those who are liberal of their pity.

In fact, the way in which the old gentleman had conducted himself, was, from the very circumstance of its seeming so soft and yielding, most galling to the vanity of the son. Little as it had been his intention to wound the feelings of his father—for we know from the best source, from himself, that he was much too kind and too dutiful a son to cherish such an intention,—yet it was but in the nature of things, that for the many mortifications which the old gentleman had inflicted, he should be brought to suffer one in his turn; and common decency demanded, that he should have given some slight proof of his having felt such a mortification. Thus to consent to a separation from his son, without the least repugnance, without a single mark of disappointment or grief, was surely to think very lightly of his

merits, as far as regarded the firm, and to raise injurious doubts respecting the value of his services, which had been so strongly confirmed by the alarm of the family, and the fright of Mr. Schlicht.

Still more did it mortify him to find that his father's conduct had exposed the fallacy of a hope which he had secretly cherished, though he had never as yet confessed as much to himself, and on which he had taught himself to rely as firm and unfailing. Had it been but once established that his services could not be dispensed with, it was easy to foresee, that his father would employ every possible means to retain him ; by which the natural goodness of his heart would certainly in the end have been moved ; a veil would have been thrown over the past, and he would again have occupied his former position upon good and advantageous terms. But now, as his father had once declared himself so very differently.

nothing was more certain, than that in his obstinate way, he would never bend to his son's purpose, and should he find his business too much for him, would rather curtail it to the utmost, than waste the smallest conciliatory word on his son. And thus the latter was placed between two equally unpleasant alternatives: he had the choice either to repent at once of the past, and patiently resume the yoke he had endeavoured to shake off, or to carry into effect his unhappy resolution of leaving the place of his birth, without enjoying the advantages intended to be gained by it. He now repented when too late, his not having listened more seriously to the forebodings of his heart, when he attempted to take leave of his father.

Another circumstance occurred to render these feelings still more poignant; this was, that his sentiments respecting the widow were not exactly what they had been. The difficulties which opposed themselves to a connec-

tion for life with her, had, as is often the case, by frequently turning them over and over in his mind, already lost the greater part of their importance, and since yesterday, when the widow appeared so extremely interesting, they had nearly vanished altogether. Her want of fortune was easily overlooked by a man, who himself possessed sufficient; the children, the images of so lovely a mother, seemed a pleasing, rather than a troublesome addition; and as for the talk of the foolish multitude, no sensible man would give himself a moment's concern about that. There, then, remained of all the former obstacles, the principal one only—the presumed opposition of his father; and to remove this last, no better means could possibly be devised than to constitute his union with Mrs. Lyk as the first and most essential point of accommodation, at his hoped-for triumphant return. Instead of escaping from his passion, as it was at first his wish to do, he thus only hastened to meet it: if, therefore, the young



gentleman had the evening before congratulated himself on the glorious victory of his reason over his weakness, it had been nothing more than one of those self-delusions, of which he was but too often the dupe ; for so far from his reason having gained the day, it was his weakness that had triumphed, and in the very determination to quit his house, the hope of a union had been concealed. His copious tears were not the effect of grief for his departure, but were caused by the secret apprehension that his scheme was not entirely secure from the danger of a miscarriage. And, indeed, as was now but too clear, such an apprehension had not been altogether groundless.

The doctor, who—except in the single point respecting the widow,—saw perfectly the whole tenor of young Mr. Stark's mind, had returned with the intention of assisting him with his advice.—He could not help feeling a passing emotion of contempt, as he beheld his brother-

in-law seated on the trunk in an abject position, with his body bent double, holding his knee with one hand, and supporting his heavy, distracted head with the other. He was perfectly aware, that *such* a man could never be persuaded to do, what he in a similar case,—though he never could have been involved in such a situation—would have done at his own suggestion; namely, rather to put into effect, in spite of every painful feeling, a resolution once carried so far, than shamefully to draw back and abandon it. He was of opinion that nothing farther could be done for his brother-in-law, than to watch for some favourable turn of things, which would afford him an opportunity, without too much reproach, of again offering his services to his father; and this opportunity appeared to him, as it were, intentionally presented to him by the generous and liberal presents of the father. It was natural that the heart of the son should have been moved by them, and just as natural, that this emotion

should have created the desire never to leave so tender, so noble-minded a parent. Besides, if the old gentleman was satisfied that his son conceded the chief point by avowing a disposition to marry, there was no doubt of his joyful acquiescence in his return; nay, it might even be reasonably hoped, that with the exception of the money affairs, he would give up the business entirely to his son.

Young Mr. Stark listened to this project which the doctor unfolded with all possible delicacy and circumspection, not without shame, but still with calmness. Only at the word marriage, he heaved such a deep, such a heart-felt sigh, that the doctor immediately suspected that some new and heavier cause of grief must remain behind. In the course of the conversation, he dropped a word respecting Mrs. Lyk, of the amiability of her manners, and the loveliness of her person: the effect surpassed his expectation. Mr. Stark sprang from the trunk, flew to the window, and discovered by the tears

that streamed from his eyes, how far his heart was already gone. The knot now became by far too intricate for the doctor to know how immediately to solve the difficulty.—In order to gain time, he pretended, in the quality both of brother and physician, to feel concerned about the health of his brother-in-law; he took his hand, and declared that his pulse betrayed a considerable degree of fever. The young gentleman, as if he had been longing for some plausible pretext for delaying his departure, joyfully availed himself of the doctor's words. A little spontaneous shivering fit came over him quite apropos, he sat down, as if entirely exhausted, and declared, that for some days past, he had really felt some degree of fever. The doctor immediately ordered some medicine, which could do neither good nor harm, and Mr. Stark thought it prudent to keep his room on account of a cold accompanied by fever, which, however, was not, he said, of so serious a nature to give the family any alarm.

CHAPTER XV.

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"WHAT will you give me, if I tell you of a discovery?" said the doctor, when he returned home to his wife.

"Let us hear it!—Perhaps I may be able to give you a counter-discovery."

"Your brother is desperately in love with Mrs. Lyk."

"Mrs. Lyk is desperately in love with my brother."

"Is that possible?"—And now followed from both the parties a disclosure of their hearts,

which was sweetened by all the charms of connubial confidence.

“She is ill, very ill indeed,” said Mrs. Herbst, “I have enquired all particulars about her from a young lady, her friend, who was just now here; she wishes you to call on her; she has never ceased weeping since yesterday evening,—mark it well!—from the very moment my brother left her—”

“Your brother? Then he had been to take his leave of her.”

“Of course!—She has never since yesterday, as the young lady told me, ceased weeping; she did not close an eye during the whole night; her spirits, and appetite are gone; and then she has the spasms so dreadfully!”

“Spasms? Hem!”

"In short, the poor woman is violently in love; and now my dear Herbst, leave every thing, dinner and all, and hasten to her, that we may hear all about it!"

"It is true she is none of the strongest," said the doctor, who seemed somewhat incredulous, "she is under the greatest obligations to your brother; she has a grateful heart—"

"Why that is the very reason! Such hearts are the most susceptible; they catch fire like tinder.—My brother is a good-looking man."

"So he is."

"And I too know a certain person, who at first was merely grateful, because one, who shall be nameless—a still better looking man—had cured her of a malignant fever, and who afterwards—"

This deserved a kiss;—the kiss was given, and the doctor hurried away.

He found the widow really indisposed, but not so bad as the young lady her friend, and Mrs. Herbst had represented her to be. She confessed, after some struggle with herself, that the chief reason of her indisposition, was a great oppression upon her heart. The doctor listened with both his ears; he already imagined that he witnessed the extraordinary case of a lady betraying the weakness of her own heart; but when the secret was disclosed it arose from nothing else than her situation with respect to the aforesaid creditor. The doctor was his physician, and had rendered great services as well to him as to his family; on this account the widow hoped, that by his kind interposition, she might obtain a respite of some weeks; and she solicited this, as a kindness, which would contribute more powerfully to her recovery, than all the medicines in the world. She said her



situation was the most urgent imaginable, although by no means desperate: she should be able, if time were given her, to pay off all her debts, even to the last farthing; and for the truth of her assertion, she appealed to the brother-in-law of the doctor, to young Mr. Stark—if he were still in town.—

The peculiar tone in which these last words were pronounced, accompanied with a half-suppressed sigh, while her eye, which till then had been raised, now suddenly sank upon her bosom; all these were indications which the doctor could not allow to escape him.

“ I am ready in every way to serve you, my dear friend,” said he; “ but I cannot but remark that the sum which you name is but trifling, and that the man with whom we have to deal, is of a rough and unaccommodating disposition.— Little as I doubt to prevail with him to accept my propositions, still he might say a hundred

things which would hurt me extremely. Now, why would you choose a rough and untrodden path, when a broad and open way lies before you !”

“ What way ? ” enquired the widow with a sigh.

“ You have just now named a friend, to whom every opportunity of serving you is a source of real gratification. I will answer for his sentiments towards you.”

“ This friend—”

“ Do not refuse him the happiness of rendering you a service.”

“ The happiness ?—And if it be a happiness, you will acknowledge, my dear sir, that he has enjoyed more than his share of it.—I sink under

the burthen of my obligations; I never, never can repay them.—And besides, is not this friend on the point of taking his departure? Is he not going to leave us? Will he have sufficient money for his own establishment?"—Her voice faltered, and she seemed labouring under an extraordinary emotion.

"He has no want whatever, madam, certainly not!—Let him depart with the joyful assurance of having secured your welfare! Allow me to go to him, and state the case. In a few moments it will all be arranged." He rose, and was on the point of going.

"No, no!" was all the widow could utter. She had seized the hand of the doctor to retain him, with a vehemence quite unusual with her. He felt the tremor and burning of the hand that grasped his own, and begged her to have regard to the delicate state of her health. —"Since it is your wish, I will speak with

your creditor ; and you may consider the affair as good as concluded. Depend on me, my dear friend, and be composed."

This short conversation was quite enough to warrant the doctor telling his wife on his return, that her observations were just, and that she had not been mistaken.—" But," added he, " what in the name of goodness will be the result of all this ? How will it end ?"

" How can you ask such a question ?—If she is really as lovely and amiable and good, as you have at all times given her credit to be—"

" That she is indeed !"

" Then all we have to do is to send for a third person, for the parish priest. He knows a remedy for such complaints."

" Why, for my part, I should like it of all things ;

“The most sensible I ever met with in the whole course of my life.”

“Well, and here is his daughter!” said she, pointing with her fore-finger to her breast, and stretching her little figure as high as possible.

“Just so!” said the doctor, bowing, and heartily laughing at her comical pathos. “I am all veneration, madam. But might I not, by special favour, be admitted to a previous knowledge of some little portion of your plan?”

“Undoubtedly, as soon as there shall be such a plan.—But do you know, what above all things must be done, and which nobody can do so well as yourself?—Try and give to my father’s mind a better impression of my brother’s character, acquaint him with his conduct towards the late Mr. Lyk. I am sure that will not fail to please him, and highly too.—Do not forget to tell him also how nobly he has fulfilled

his promise, and how sedulously during whole months he had devoted all his leisure to the benefit of the widow. I know such traits of character will delight the old man and win his heart. I am sure if he heard of such conduct on the part of a total stranger, it would instantly endear him to the man; what then will be his feelings when the question is of his son! He certainly should have known of this earlier."

"And he would so, and all of you, had I not been obliged to pledge my word to your brother to remain silent. But now, as things stand, the moment I find an opportunity—"

"You will do what your good wife requests of you: is it not so?"

"I am bound in duty so to do."

"Very well!—And in the mean time I will form an acquaintance with this widow of our's

without delay. I have already prepared the way, through the medium of the young lady of whom I before spoke. I feel quite anxious to be acquainted with her.—Besides, there are her two little ones, who daily pass our door, on their way to school; these children of hers are two angels! To-morrow I will invite them into the house, and I am sure I shall make as much of them as if they were my own.”

## CHAPTER XVI.



It was not long before the doctor found an opportunity of fulfilling his promise.—“I am glad to see you,” exclaimed Mr. Stark, as his son-in-law entered the room, “how do you do?—and above all things, how does our critical patient? For, my dear doctor, I do not see his mother making any preparations.”

“Preparations? For what, my dear sir?”

“Why for the farewell repast, which I have bespoke.—What then, has his fever not yet left him?”—A certain momentary play of the muscles



about his lips, quite peculiar to him, seemed to indicate that he did not consider the illness of his son to be of a very serious nature.

“ It is, as it is ;” said the doctor, who the more gladly seized this occasion of speaking in favour of his brother-in-law, as Mr. Stark had just finished his most heavy post-day, and now, according to his custom, was reclining in his arm-chair, to repose after his labours. He knew that there was no moment when the heart of the old gentleman was more open to the impressions of every thing good and agreeable ; it was then that he would cast from him that pressure of the passing moment, which was sometimes of itself a burthen to him ; for, as to the past, he always surveyed it with composure of mind, and looked with cheerful hopes on the future.

“ You speak quite doubtfully, doctor,” replied he. “ I hope he will not fall into a lin-

gering illness.—If that be the case, the intended journey may be postponed to a very distant period.”—He again smiled.

“ At present, it is merely a cold accompanied by fever; nothing more.—I trust there is not any thing worse concealed under it. We have had unpleasant instances of this kind.”

“ But it is a thing that can be prevented in time; is it not?”

“ Certainly.—But should this prove a serious case, I do not know of any man over whom I should watch more faithfully, or for whom I should feel more tender solicitude than for him. I love him with all my heart; for though I am by no means blind to his little weaknesses, I still know that he ranks, and deservedly so, in the number of the most upright, nay of the most noble-minded, of our young citizens.”

"That sounds very fine indeed ; particularly in the ears of a father."

"You have almost frightened me from speaking to you about your son."

"How so ?—If you had such things to tell me of him, and, what would be still better, if you could produce proofs of the same, then might you speak to me from morning until night, I should never be tired of listening to you.—Alas ! such things would possess but too much of the charm of novelty in my regard."

"And how should such things have come to your knowledge ?—Your son was never one of those, who sound the trumpet of their own good deeds."

"Well, this sounds finer and finer !"—He bent forward a little towards the doctor, and added, with a slight and incredulous shake of

the head ;—" You have awakened my curiosity. Pray what wonderful things am I to hear?"

The doctor was under no embarrassment how to choose among the various proofs of his brother-in-law's generosity and disinterestedness. One was fresh in his memory, and this one was amply sufficient for his purpose.— "You recollect," he began, "the unhappy circumstances between your son and the late Mr. Lyk ? You know likewise, what malignant and defamatory letters this unthinking man, seduced by commercial interest, wrote to Altona, in order to blacken the character of your son."

" I know it all.—But my dear doctor, if it is not quite indispensable for your purpose; drop this topic!—When that man died, I was sorry for him, and I buried all recollections of the past in his grave."

“That was nobly done!—And far indeed be it from me to wish to drag them forth from the tomb!—But you will agree with me, that to return such bitter outrages, which were not less wounding to the man than to the merchant, by the most important, irksome, and laborious services, is still more generous than a mere oblivion of the past.”

“And who has acted thus?” eagerly demanded Mr. Stark.

“Your son.—The little hope I entertained of saving the life of the late Mr. Lyk, his frame being totally decayed, and his fever daily becoming more and more violent, was completely frustrated by a something that evidently preyed upon his mind. For a long time I endeavoured in vain to get to the bottom of it; but at last I discovered that he felt the most painful anxiety to atone for the wrong

that he had done your son, and was convinced that he could not die in peace, unless he eased his conscience by the most sincere and heartfelt entreaty for pardon. I offered myself as mediator in the business and was cheerfully accepted. On my first mentioning it to your son, he did not appear immediately prepared to visit the unfortunate man; but this did not, as I first thought, arise from any remains of resentment, or from any obduracy of heart, but was solely the effect of his natural repugnance to a sick-room, and from an apprehension of the too forcible impression which the sight of a dying man might make upon his mind. But when at length he had summed up resolution sufficient to follow me, and beheld the unhappy man, who, sobbing aloud, stretched forth his trembling arms towards him, in an instant all his aversion, all his fear so completely vanished, that he rushed with the most lively emotion towards the sick man, and

embraced him with a heart overflowing with fervour and emotion. His humane, generous, and noble conduct moved all that were present to tears, and even I, who am not much accustomed to the melting mood, could not restrain my own. How did he endeavour to calm the poor sufferer, to spare him the pain of a confession, which might have been so humbling, so wounding to his soul. How gushed forth the pure stream of pardon, forgiveness, and reconciliation from his full heart, when at length, the warmth of his emotions permitted him to give utterance to them!— Ask but a proof, said he, ask but a proof of my sincerity, dear Lyk, and if by any means it lies within my power, I swear that I will fulfil it. Can I serve you, can I serve any of yours? Can I do so at this moment, can I do it at any future time? How can I do it? By what means? I am only waiting for your word, my good Lyk, and whatever it may be—”

With such intense earnestness had the old gentleman listened all this while, that he sat in his arm-chair without moving hand or foot. Only in the beginning he had shifted his peruke, in order to remove it a little from his sound ear, and now, all at once, his fingers were up to his eye-lashes.

"The dying Mr. Lyk," continued the doctor, availed himself of the declaration of his reconciled enemy, by making a request, of the importance of which I was not aware, till I saw what enormous labour its fulfilment required. He confessed, that his affairs were in great confusion, and his ledgers in no small disorder."

"I can readily believe that," said Mr. Stark.

"He lamented the fate of his poor wife, and of his helpless children, in case he should be called away from the world."



"Yes, he was right there; for I believe he was on the very eve of a bankruptcy."

"True; and this would undoubtedly have taken place, but for the indefatigable activity of your son."

"What do you mean?"

"The request had scarcely past the lips of the sufferer, when your son pledged his most solemn word, that in case of his demise, he would not rest till every thing, as far as it possibly could be done, should be restored to order."

"And did he fulfil his promise?" exclaimed Mr. Stark, with eagerness.

"With the most scrupulous fidelity. During whole months he passed his time, evening after evening, in that house of mourning,

engaged in the most wearisome labours,—adjusting ledgers, writing accounts, answering letters—and all this whilst you, my dear father, thought him to be either at balls or concerts, or at the gaming-table.”

Had the doctor suppressed this last superfluous addition, it would have been all the better; for without benefiting his brother-in-law, he had hurt himself by it. It was the means of his losing a little cask of wine, or some other present, which, without this, he certainly would have received as a reward for the gratifying communication he had made.

“To be sure I have no prophetic spirit!” said the old gentleman, somewhat piqued. “With the follies of my son, which could not do otherwise than wound me, I was allowed to become acquainted; but as for his good deeds, which would have filled me with joy—”

and kind a manner, as if it had contained the most agreeable news possible.

During the whole evening, the discovery which he had so unexpectedly made, inspired him with unusual serenity and cheerfulness. He felt as if only now, in his old age, a son had been born to him. When he retired to his chamber, he gave his wife a very fervent and hearty kiss, at which the good lady, who for this many a year had been unaccustomed to such matrimonial tenderness, was not a little, nor disagreeably surprised. The only thing that still secretly vexed him, was the circumstance, that a piece of goods, of which the inside could boast of so admirable and so delicate a texture, should be so very unpromising in the part that met the eye.

## CHAPTER XVII.

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PLEASANT, however, as had been the reveries under which the old gentleman had fallen asleep, those under which he awoke were of a very opposite kind. His whole soul had been full of the narrative of the doctor, and a dream transported him to the house of the late Mr. Lyk, where he enjoyed the pleasure of beholding his son covered with dust and perspiration, in the midst of large heaps of all sorts of merchandise, thrown together in the strangest confusion, and which his son was using all his care and ingenuity to arrange in some order. He was on the point of lending a helping hand in the work, when suddenly all the images which were associated in his mind with the name of Lyk, became

alive around him, and caused him to repent most bitterly his having entered a house, full of such mad extravagance and such scandalous revelries. However he endured for some minutes the appearance of the magnificent apartments, better fitted for a prince than for a merchant ; of the tables groaning beneath the weight of a thousand delicacies ; of the numerous servants running to and fro ; and even of the wild, noisy, half-intoxicated guests, who were pouring down champagne like water : but when he beheld his son interchanging sweet and significant looks with the lady of the house, and when both suddenly stood before him, dressed in party-coloured dominos, with masks in their hands and red heels to their shoes, overcome with disgust and sickness of heart he rushed towards the door, and thanked heaven on regaining the large ground floor, which had been so well known to him in the times of his late old friend, Mr. Lyk the father. On entering it, he carefully lifted both the skirts of his coat, and held them close to his

side, in order that he might walk untouched through the numerous bales, barrels, tubs, chests, and packages, between which there was formerly but a very narrow passage; but suddenly he became aware, to his utter astonishment, that his precaution had been quite unnecessary, and that the floor was as unencumbered with any thing in the shape of merchandise, as a treasury is with money after a long war. The walls were all hung with blazing lamps, and in an instant there resounded from the back-ground of the saloon—for this floor had now been turned into a saloon—the gay music of the dance; couple after couple came running and driving in like madmen, in crowded confusion, and when he sought softly to squeeze himself a passage by the side of the wall, in order to steal away backwards, and, if possible, quit the house unobserved, suddenly one of the gayest ladies of the place, whose reputation was not one of the best, ran up to him, hurried him, in spite of all his struggling into the set, and then, in conjunction

with the whole company, whirled the good old gentleman—who never since his youth had joined in a quiet dance, and then only on occasion of some particular festivity—so mercilessly up and down, that when they at length ceased, he could scarcely recover his breath. He now found himself opposite a mirror which presented to him his grey hairs, the venerable wrinkles of his brow, his figure and dress, all forming the most striking contrast with the rest of the gay company. This view awoke him instantly; and he found himself as much out of breath and covered with perspiration, as if the violent exercise he imagined he had undergone in the dream, had been a waking reality.

“Thank heavens!” exclaimed he, opening his eyes as wide as he could and rejoicing at the lonely glimpse of his night-lamp, “it was but a dream! I should scarcely have thought that a dream could have given me so severe and exhausting a piece of exercise. This is very

trying to the constitution! What wild, what raving madmen were these!"—And as the agitation of his blood still continued, and as the odious images still danced before his eye in nearly all their former vivacity, he began to be angry in good earnest at the madness which leads so many people, for such silly, paltry, and miserable pleasures, as he had just witnessed, to risk their fortune, their health, and their good name. He thought with the utmost bitterness on the possibility that his fortune too, which, like that of his old friend Lyk, had been so hardly acquired, might be dissipated in the course of a few years, and that the name of Stark, which he had raised to such consideration and honour, might perhaps be covered with shame and ignominy. Here the sweet, tender looks, which he had seen interchanged by his son with Mrs. Lyk, fell heavily upon his heart. A cold shivering came over all his frame. He however consoled himself by the reflection that a love for money was no less a passion in the



and kind a manner, as if it had contained the most agreeable news possible.

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detaching him from those paltry vanities, for which he has hitherto manifested so unhappy an inclination ; and then—yes, good bye to you, Mrs. Lyk, with all your elegancies, your fashions, and the whole of your graces and attractions, which you may keep in store for some one else. . . Fare ye well ! You are not for my son !—

If these logical deductions, exact and correct as they appeared to be, still approximated but little to the truth, the cause lay concealed in two errors of very general occurrence : the first was, that Mr. Stark supposed himself to be fully and entirely acquainted with a character which had heretofore only partially unfolded itself ; the other was, that calculating upon the nature of the circumstances under which he imagined this character to act, he had made some important mistakes, with the origin of which we shall, perhaps, become acquainted at a later period. It was enough, that for the moment

Mr. Stark felt his mind quieted, and again fell asleep.—The ascending vapours had however somewhat troubled his horizon, and the rising of the sun was not so serene as his setting might have led us to expect.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

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MRS. HERBST had paid the intended visit to Mrs. Lyk; and the feelings with which she returned might have been easily guessed from those with which she went.—The widow was not exactly beautiful, but very interesting; there were other women, who, if not now, at least at a former period, would not have suffered by a comparison, and who, in spite of all the sad inroads upon beauty which a large family had caused, still continued to preserve their face and figure wonderfully well.

But a something indescribably sweet and interesting in the features, the voice, and the whole deportment of Mrs. Lyk; her respect for the

memory of her late husband, who by his mad extravagancies had rendered her miserable, but who still loved her tenderly; the excellent way in which she educated her children; her warm gratitude towards *her friend*, of whom she never spoke without a tear glistening in her eye, all this possessed a higher value than beauty, and Mrs. Herbst felt such an enthusiastic regard for her new acquaintance, that, she repeatedly declared to her husband, she should never rest her head quietly on her pillow, till she had succeeded in bringing about an alliance between her brother and the widow.—“There is no woman upon earth, with whom my brother would be so happy; she possesses in her natural good sense, in her principles, confirmed by experience, in the whole of her character, so naturally disposed to tranquillity and domestic happiness, every qualification most needed by my brother, every requisite that my father himself could wish in his son’s companion for life.”

money-making souls, whom you may see running about by dozens on the exchange."

"But," continued she, "did the fellow then never once call to mind the many obligations he is under to you? Did he never once allude to the dangerous illness of his wife and children, when at the risk of your own health—"

"Oh, never talk of that. It has been paid for, you know."

"Paid for?—And can such things ever be paid for?"

"Nay more, if he were to look over my account, he would perhaps find that I am still deeply in his debt. For has he not invited me to his large dinner-parties? Have I not partaken in company with senators and magistrates, of his pheasants and tokay?"

“The villain!—Oh, how different from my good father!”

“Hold! who would name him in such company? But, my dear, we forget what is most essential—”

“Very true! How we are to extricate the poor widow out of her difficulties.”

“No longer say *her*, but *me*.—My weak heart has played me a very sad trick, and it is ten to one but I go to prison for it.”

“Good heavens! Why surely you did not lay violent hands on the fellow?”

“Oh fie!—I have too great a regard for my hands to do that.—Only out of vexation when I perceived that nothing could be done with him, I called for pen, ink, and paper, inquired the amount of the sum to the very last



farthing, and drew a bill upon myself, for a thousand and odd crowns, payable in eight days."

"Bravo!" exclaimed Mrs. Herbst, and threw her arms about her husband's neck.—"But is it possible! Could that wretch accept the bill from you? From you?"

"Why not? I have got this handsome house, I have got you; I am in his estimation worth a thousand crowns, and some trifle more."

"But have you got the money to pay him?"

"Why, there is the rub!—Not three hundred crowns."

"Herbst! Herbst! Have you thus thrown yourself into the jaws of the monster?"

"Even so! For what I had been laying up for sometime past, was, as you well know, only

last week put out on a mortgage. There are no new receipts that I expect; at least no considerable ones, for the present; but the bill having once been given, paid it must be.— However, do you know upon what I repose with full confidence?"

"No. It is perhaps upon some remnant of shame in Mr. Horn?"

"Oh no!—Upon the sensible daughter of the sensible Mr. Stark, whom I have the good fortune to call my wife. She with her head will certainly carry me through it."

The doctor's real hopes reposed upon the full round bag, which the father, on his visit to the son, had placed upon the drawers, and which, as far as he knew, still remained there untouched. But his wife, who, after having returned thanks for the confidence, as kind as it was just, which he reposed in her understanding,

had begun to ponder for a little, suddenly clapped her hands, and exclaimed—"I have it."

"The money?" said the doctor.

"No; but the way to get it. The widow herself shall procure it."

"The widow?"

"And more than that, from my father."

"From your father?"

"Yes, indeed, from my father! And where's the wonder?—The old gentleman must be made acquainted with the widow some time or other, if we wish to attain our end; and we shall never find a better opportunity than the present.—In one word, she pays a visit to my father, solicits my father, pleases my father, pays her debts, and marries my brother."

“ Dear me ! ” exclaimed the doctor, “ and I have not yet got a suit ready for the wedding. — I am taken quite by surprise, I must run immediately to my tailor. ”

“ Ha, ha, ha, ha ! — You may make your joke of it as you please. But the thing is as good as done. It is quite impossible, that he should fail to be pleased with her ; and it is upon this favourable impression we must work our way ; remove all his prejudices, and bring him not only to consent to the marriage, but even to wish for it. ”

“ But if he should refuse a visit from the widow ? How then ? ”

“ Never fear that. ”

“ Or if, supposing the worst, and indeed we have some reasons to fear it, — if he should receive her unkindly ? ”

“ If what ? ”—Here she stood for a moment in silence, with her eyes fixed on the ground. She then exclaimed—“ My dear man ! you are really sometimes charming ! I could give you a kiss for this idea ! ”

“ For what idea ? ”

“ That my father might perhaps receive her unkindly.—Oh heaven grant it may be so ! ”

“ Oh woman, woman, who can ever make you out ? ”

“ Come here ! I will make this clear to you.—Now listen ! If my father were to receive her unkindly, he would commit a fault ; he would be doing a thing quite at variance with his usual manner of acting, and would wish to make amends, cost what it might ; he will thus by his own means be thrown out of that tone of good humour, in which it is so difficult to

manage him, or make him give up his own notions of things. Thus we should come at once, by a leap as it were, to the desired object, which otherwise we should have had to approach by a thousand tedious and circuitous ways."

"That is all very fine!" said the doctor, "the only thing we have to fear is—"

"That he will not commit the fault!"

"Just the contrary!—That he might not acknowledge it to be a fault."

"Pugh! Let him but once commit it; and as for the acknowledgment, we will soon get that from him."—

"But, my love,"—and here the doctor shook his head thoughtfully, and assumed a very serious air—"to lay a snare for your own father—I really do not know—"

“ A snare !—What a perversion of words !—a snare indeed ! I never dreamed the least harm in the world ; nothing is intended but what is kind and good—and there comes a gentleman and raises a hue and cry, as if nothing but mischief was hatching. And after all who put the basilisk’s egg into the nest but this very gentleman ? Who started the unlucky idea of my father’s behaving unkindly ? Nay, nay, he will be kind to her, kindness itself ; and of this my good doctor shall himself be shortly a witness.”—At these words she took her cloak, and was already half way down the street, whilst the doctor was still lost in thought, and puzzling himself where to find the clue, that was to lead him out of this labyrinth of sophistry.

## CHAPTER XIX.

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THE astonishment with which Mrs. Lyk saw her new friend returning so quickly, was transformed into joy, when she heard the happy issue of the negotiation with Mr. Horn; but this joy was again transformed into anxiety, when Mrs. Herbst asked her, if besides this Mr. Horn, of whom she had now got rid for the present, there were any other creditors?"

"None, I trust, so pressing and so violent," said the widow.

"But suppose others among them should rise at once against you, how then?—Would it not be most essential for the tranquillity of your



mind, my dear friend, if you could at once silence the whole of them?"

"If that were possible, what a happiness would it be! But unless time be allowed me, unless confidence be reposed in me—"

"Do you know my father?" said Mrs. Herbat, interrupting her.

"Scarcely by sight."

"But you know his character, his manner of thinking?"

"I entertain the highest opinion of both; I judge of the father by his children."

"Children do not always turn out well. Believe me, the children of old Mr. Stark would be much better, if they more nearly resembled their good father."

"For the gratitude I owe, this is saying by far too much."

"And by far too little for my heart."—Here she began to sketch a picture, and although it resembled the old gentleman tolerably well in the main points, still as a portrait, for which it was intended, it had too little distinctness of feature, too little of the peculiarity of his manner to be perfect. Filial love warmed into fervour, and that too vivid enthusiasm, which always embellishes and *idealises*, had mixed the colours. However, these very faults rendered the picture better calculated to inspire the widow with unlimited confidence, and to awake in her bosom a strong desire to form so excellent an acquaintance. Had there also appeared among the finer features of the sage, benevolent, generous old man, the severe air of the moralizer, and the smile of the satirist, traits so predominant and characteristic in the physiognomy of Mr. Stark, her confidence would

undoubtedly have been much weakened, and her desire to see him considerably diminished.

The widow expressed in the strongest terms her admiration and respect; and her curiosity was not a little excited, to know to what all this tended.

“Do you likewise know—pardon my asking all these questions—do you know the house of Blum?”

“Perfectly well. It is also among my creditors.”

“And how do they conduct themselves towards you? Well?”

“Nay more; their conduct has been most generous; they have granted me a respite of several months.”

"A mere duty, my friend!—I see they had not forgotten the great obligations they were under at a former period to good Mr. Lyk, your late father-in-law."

"I am not at all acquainted with the circumstance."

"Why, it is like a dream to me, for I was very young at the time. But I remember that on one occasion my father returned very late from the Exchange, and talked of nothing else the whole day, but of Mr. Blum—the grandfather of the present Mr. Blum—who had stopped payment, and whose down-fall was considered as unavoidable.—My father, though he had no commercial connexion with him, took the most lively interest in his welfare, and spoke in terms of great indignation against certain people, who, full of secret envy, persecuted the honest and innocent man, and endeavoured to hasten on his ruin. My father came to a determination

to save him if possible ; and old Mr. Lyk, his most intimate friend, applauded his determination. My father accordingly undertook an examination of Blum's ledgers, and found that with sufficient assistance he might in all probability be saved, and that his failure—or rather his embarrassment, as it should more properly have been termed—was not in the least occasioned by any fault of his own.”

At these last words, the widow cast down her eyes and sighed.

“ My father, in conjunction with Mr. Lyk, now took the whole of the debts upon himself, paid off the more importunate creditors, fixed terms for the rest, and, to sum up all in one word, put an end to all the poor man's embarrassments, and completely crushed the persecution that had been raised against him.—What caused this scene to make so deep an impression upon my memory—for I was then a child—was

my astonishment, at beholding a venerable old man, who might have been my father's father, with his hoary locks flowing down his shoulders and the tears streaming from his eyes. The good gentleman was quite melted with emotion and gratitude.—He afterwards came very frequently to our house, and strengthened my recollection of him, by the number of playthings and sweetmeats that he used to bring me.—And now, my dear friend—must I still name my object for stating all this? My father is still the same sort of man, his will to help is the same, his fortune to do it, the—but no! that is not the same; it has been doubled and perhaps trebled since then. And now—what should hinder you from soliciting, without any farther ceremony, the same favour at his hands, praying that he would act towards you as he formerly acted towards Mr. Blum, and take upon himself the whole of your debts?—Besides your little ones are the grand-children of his old friend; recollect that!”

The widow was not only astonished but even startled at this proposal. Gratitude urged her not to neglect the counsel of so kind a friend, one who felt so tender an interest in her welfare, and yet the natural reserve of her character made it appear not only impracticable, but even utterly impossible, to carry this advice into effect.

“How can I,” said she, in a stammering voice, “how shall I find the courage—dear Mrs. Herbst—I, a perfect stranger—I, a person quite unknown to him.—”

“You really have no reason to hesitate. The service which you solicit, although worthy of your thanks, is not so mighty a business after all. Your affairs I understand, are already brought into good order by my brother; an examination of your ledgers is no longer necessary; there is no danger of being a loser by you, and therefore—I shall not cease to annoy you—I am a very

obstinate woman! You must give me your word, that you will go not later than to-morrow, to see my father."

The widow stood trembling, but Mrs. Herbst, although she pitied her in her heart, did not cease to urge her still more earnestly.

"It would, indeed, have been more natural, my dear Lyk, to have addressed yourself to my brother instead of my father; for you know him already, and I doubt not but you are aware in what high estimation he holds you, and how very truly and sincerely he is devoted to you."

A deep blush suffused the cheeks of the widow, which, vanishing as rapidly, left them again completely pale. Mrs. Herbst did not appear to remark it.

"But the whimsical fellow!—God knows for what reason—but he has made up his mind to



go, to leave his native place, to separate from his father, and establish a firm of his own.— Besides, he has neither the influence, nor the weight of my father, and he at present stands in need of his little all, for his own use:—and hence you see—”

“ I see it all !” said the widow. “ I am indebted to you beyond what words can express, for the interest you take in my welfare, and for your kindness, so gratuitous, so unmerited on my part; but since for the time being there is no danger, now that Mr. Horn, as you have informed me, is silenced for the present; and as the rest of the creditors are not so urgent—”

Mrs. Herbst was now obliged, although she felt much reluctance in so doing, to speak out the full truth, and to tell the widow, that if she refused to visit her father, her dear husband might get into trouble on account of a bill, which he had given for her sake, and which, in

fact, had been the only means of pacifying Mr. Horn, and that the doctor himself would certainly feel embarrassed as to the means of satisfying so violent and obdurate a creditor.—The mere mention of this single and unexpected fact, was decisive: the widow now solemnly promised, although with a heavy and dejected heart, that the very next day she would pay her respects to old Mr. Stark.

## CHAPTER XX.

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IT was about tea-time, and Mrs. Herbst, who had become quite thirsty after so much talking, having declined to drink tea at the widow's, had an idea of going and taking it with her mother. Here she also found her father, who would from time to time partake of a cup of tea with his wife—for this beverage had not at that period become general in Germany as in our days—and here too she found the first clerk of the house, Mr. Burg, whom Mrs. Stark was just questioning about a report which had reached her. It was said that an uncle of Mr. Burg, of very good fortune, and which he had hoped to

inherit, had all at once made up his mind, notwithstanding his old age, to marry. "Is it true, Mr. Burg?" inquired Mrs. Stark.

"Alas, but too true!" replied he.

"But, tell me, I pray, how came he to take such a notion into his head? I always thought him a man of more sense."

"Why, my dear," said Mr. Stark, who felt at that moment inclined for a little raillery—"is it then nonsense to marry?"

"Heaven forbid! It would be impious to say so. Matrimony is a divine institution."

"So I think. And for this very reason, my dear, the old uncle, after a long blindness, has at length become enlightened; he repents of the sinful life of an old bachelor, and takes up his cross."

"Yes, yes!" exclaimed Mr. Burg, upon whom the probable loss of the inheritance weighed heavily—"I have no doubt but he will meet with his cross; I have no doubt of it!"

"My good Mr. Burg," said Mrs. Stark, in a pious tone, "every one upon earth meets with his cross, and that which heaven has allotted to your uncle he should bear without murmuring. That is the duty of a Christian."

Mrs. Herbst had much to do not to laugh outright.—"But you hear," said the old gentleman, "that he willingly goes to meet his doom, and that he enters most submissively the school of patience. What can you require more?—These bachelors are a foolish race of beings, that's certain . . . in their youth they cautiously avoid falling into an indiscretion, and in their old age they make up for it by rushing headlong into folly."

"Hush, hush!" exclaimed Mrs. Herbst, "my dearest father—"

"What is the matter, my child?"—

"You have at all times been so great a friend, so zealous a defender of the matrimonial state."

"Have I?—Well, then I shall continue the same. I hasten to recall what I said about indiscretion; but as to the folly, my child, you must allow that to remain!"

"An amusing distinction!—But I am content. Be it so."—

"And is it really true," resumed Mrs. Stark, "that the lady with whom your uncle is in love—"

"In love, my dear? Is he then really in love?—I thought he married merely for repentance sake."

“ At least,” said Mr. Burg, “ the repentance will follow. The person is said to be monstrously ugly.—And besides that, she brings him a ready-made family of children; at least there is a couple.”

“ Indeed ?—This was the very point I was going to enquire about,” said Mrs. Stark. “ So, he has chosen a widow, a mother of children, for his wife ? Hem !”

“ A mother of two living children.”

“ Hem ! hem !”

“ Does that seem so strange to you, my dear ? It is not so to me. In my opinion it is the only reasonable thing in the whole business. As there are children, the old man will at least become a father with honour.—To marry a widow is always the best method of fathering strange children.”

"And what other method can there be?" said Mrs. Stark, with the utmost simplicity. "O yes!" added she; whilst her daughter, who could no longer contain herself, began to laugh outright, and in which she was joined by her father. —The "O yes!" that followed, was not calculated to suppress the laugh, and good Mrs. Stark, much as she struggled to prevent it, finally laughed as heartily as the rest of them.

Mr. Stark was—as may easily be imagined—in his holiday humour; but he certainly would not have given loose to satire, or even have indulged in the slightest jest, if Mr. Wraker, the old uncle of Mr. Burg, had not been a well-known profligate, who had long forfeited the esteem of every one, and of course that of his nephew.—When, however, in the course of the conversation, the wounded self-interest of the young man betrayed itself too strongly, and led him to make some remarks of too bitter and indecorous a nature, Mr. Stark kindly but earn-



estly reminded him of his duty. He mentioned first the main point, the probable loss of the inheritance, and declared that he could not possibly view it in the light of a misfortune; for in his opinion, Mr. Burg was perfectly capable of making his fortune by his own exertions; and that a fortune of this kind was infinitely more valuable than those acquired either by inheritance or marriage.—“If you seriously examine all the large commercial houses of this town, you will find that most of them derived their origin from the present owner, or at the utmost, from the father of the present proprietor; the whole of these derived from the grand-father begin already to decline. “Self is the man,” is an admirable saying, and a true one; it is applicable to all professions, and to none more, than to our own.”—After this Mr. Stark descanted on the love-tale of Mr. Waker, and found that when regarded in one point of view, it no longer appeared so very senseless, or ridiculous.—“The lover, indeed,” said he,

is an old musty skeleton of a thing, much better fitted for the coffin, than the marriage-bed, and the bride a mis-shapen, withered, and bony belle, whose far-projecting teeth and squinting eye are not very promising indications of domestic peace.—But Mr. Burg, pray cast your eye for a moment from the leading personages of the picture to the side figures, to the little helpless children. What, if their mother wisely took into consideration, that she was but a very poor woman, and that poverty is but a rough sky for such tender and delicate plants to thrive under? What, if she felt desirous to bring her little progeny into the softer and milder atmosphere of comfort and competency, in order to secure them a more rapid growth, and a more vigorous maturity? In this case, the match, as far as it regards her, is no longer so very ridiculous; it is rather a very motherly and sensible mode of acting.—And what, if on his side, Mr. Wraker, has also been actuated by motives deserving much more our appro-

bation than our reproof? What, if after a life full of disorder, he wishes at last to do something meritorious, and make the fortune of two innocent orphans, who perhaps will gratefully recognize it, and keep his memory in honour?—It is true, that by this means he interferes with the interest of his good nephew, who otherwise would have been his next heir; but, the old man might perhaps have thought to himself—a man like him, who possesses such ample resources in himself, and who will only smile at such a loss—”

“ So I do, so I do ! with all my heart,” said Mr. Burg, while with a grin, intended to express a smile of indifference, he turned down his cup, according to the old German fashion, and took his leave.

Mrs. Herbst took the hand of her father and kissed it.—“ This I do,” said she, “ in the name of the little ones whose cause you have

pleaded so forcibly.—Oh! How much do I pity such poor little orphans!—As often as I see such poor innocent beings, I cannot help wishing that I had a downright honest young man at hand in order to give them another father.”

“And the widow a husband? Is it not so? For what other reason can you have for wishing him young?”

“How? Don’t you see that? In order that he might not die too early, and leave me all my work to do over again.”

“Ha, ha! So you get out of a scrape in this way, do you? Clever enough, in all conscience!”

“And would you then have a widow marry none but a poor, weak, worn-out creature; such a miserable decrepit thing as Mr. Wraker,

fit for nothing but to help the children of other people to their bread? God help the poor widows, say I."

"That was not my meaning; provided they are not old themselves—for I confess, there is nothing I so much detest as a match between a young man and an old woman."

"Every body does so. No, my widows have not yet seen five-and-twenty, and are moreover good, modest, economical, pious,—"

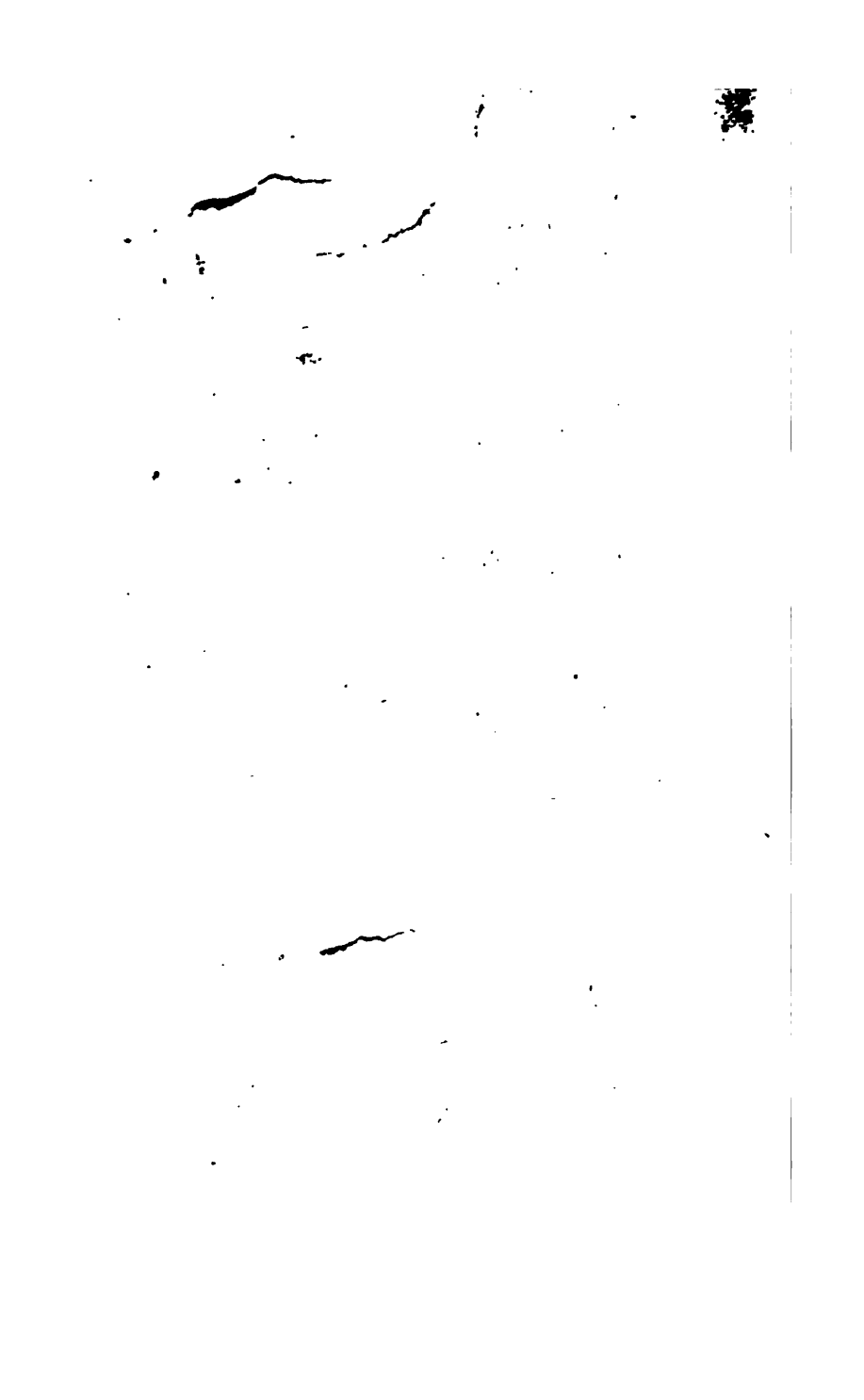
"But plain? Is it not so?"

"By no means! Rather handsome."

"Well, whoever you have, give them to whatever husband you please, to the handsomest and best man. I agree to it with all my heart!"

Excellent, excellent my good father ! thought Mrs. Herbst to herself ; we shall remind you of this in its good time, it touches you more nearly than you dream of.—She took her leave with a light heart, and, like a virtuous wife who has no secret to keep from the man of her heart, hastened to acquaint her husband with every thing that had passed.

END OF VOL. I.



**LORENZ STARK.**



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*Howlett and Brimmer, Printers,  
Fifth Street, Soho.*

# LORENZ STARK,

A

CHARACTERISTIC PICTURE

OF

A GERMAN FAMILY.

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By J. J. ENGEL.

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*Translated from the German,*

BY J. GANS.



IN TWO VOLUMES.

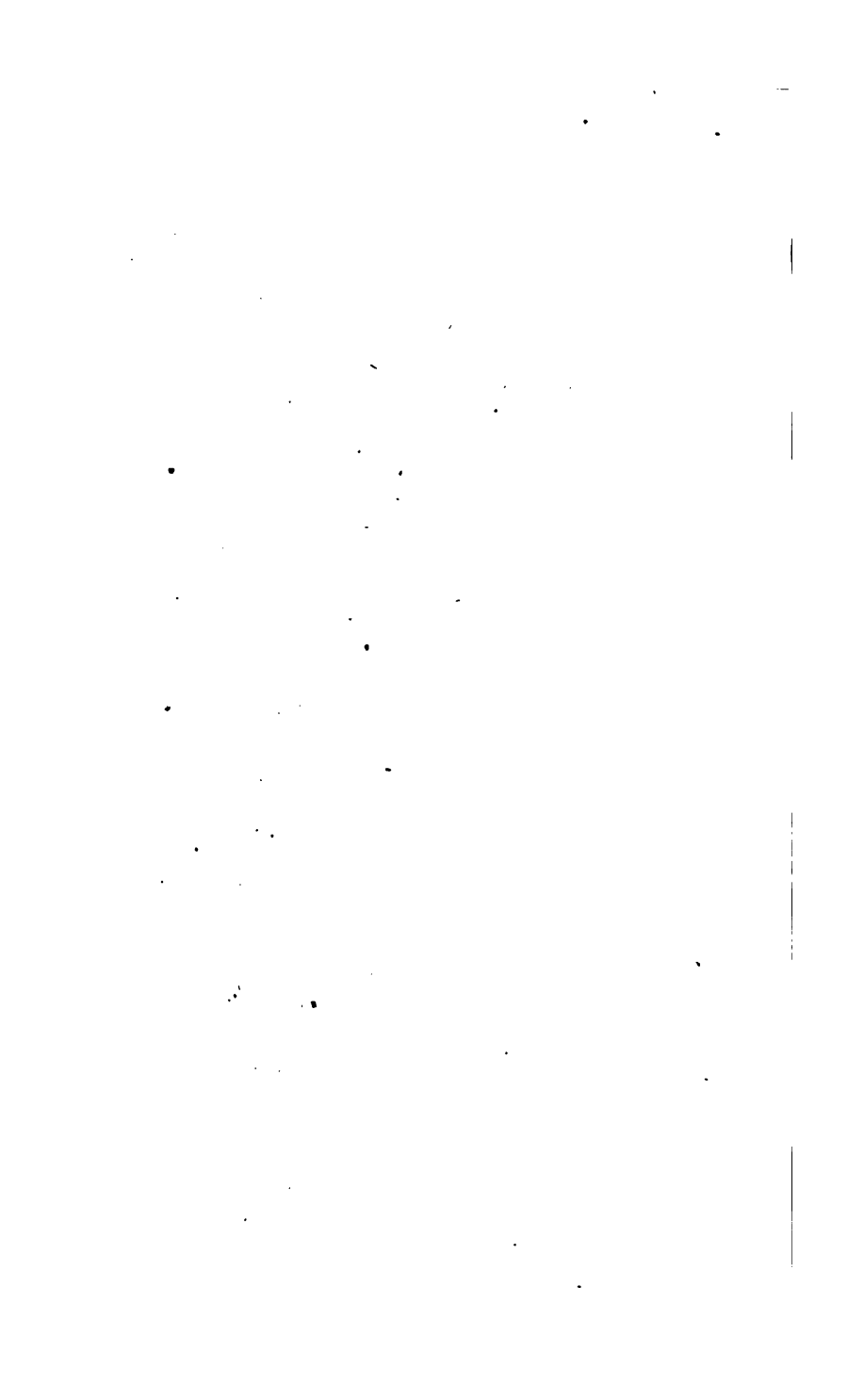
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1826.



# LORENZ STARK.

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## CHAPTER I.

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“Is it possible?” said Mr. Stark, when old Schlicht entered to announce that Mrs. Lyk wished to see him. “You must have made a mistake, my good Schlicht. It is my son she wishes to see.”

“No, no, sir? It is you. I asked her expressly.”

“Hem! Indeed!—Well then show her into the drawing-room. I will be with her directly. What in the name of goodness can it mean?”

How come I to be honoured with so extraordinary a visit?—It is scarcely half-past nine o'clock,"—looking at his watch—"and is the lady already up? already dressed? and has she taken her chocolate too at this early hour? That is quite against the fashionable rule."—He approached the glass, as he was accustomed to do whenever he adjusted his little crop wig.

"You will soon be on one side again," said he smilingly; "but, dear little pertuke of mine, we must not think of making a conquest; we are much too old, too much out of fashion for that."

He entered the drawing-room.—"I ought to blush," began the widow, who had been studying the whole, livelong night, but had not been able to find any better introduction; "I ought to blush at the trouble and loss of time I occasion."

The embarrassment and fear of the poor widow, had rendered her voice so faint and tremulous, that the old gentleman,—who' like all persons troubled with hardness of hearing, looked stedfastly in her face, and thereby still more augmented her agitation,—could perceive by the movement of her lips only that she was speaking.

Even after he had pushed his little peruke from his ear, all he was able to catch was a soft and indistinct murmur, but no articulate sound.—“I must beg you, madam,” said he, “to excuse an infirmity of age; when the weather begins to grow cold, I am troubled with a rheumatic affection in my right ear, which, however, thank heaven, is not so bad, as to oblige me to carry a speaking trumpet, like my neighbour Mr. Tylen, the printer. Only have the goodness to speak a little louder, and I shall understand you.”

This invitation to speak louder did but increase the agitation of the widow, whose previous fears had already nearly deprived her of breath, and who, moreover, had a suit to make, which was not of a nature to be shouted forth aloud. It was, therefore, with no small joy, that she, at this very moment, heard Mr. Stark invite her, to take a seat on the old-fashioned sofa; for so strong was her internal emotion, that she was scarcely capable of sustaining herself on her feet. She now succeeded in making herself audible to the old gentleman, whom she informed of the great obligations she was under to his worthy son, who by his unremitting labour and perseverance, had extricated her from embarrassments of the most distressing kind; that the goodness of the son had also inspired her with a just confidence in the father, and that she hoped—

Here her voice again began to falter, so that Mr. Stark was unable to make out *what*

it was that she hoped. Could he have heard her words, he would have learned that she solicited him to act with equal generosity, and that, if she should be pressed by any of her creditors, he would not deny her his enlightened advice, and even his active assistance.—Mr. Stark understood the few words, that caught his ears, such as generosity, advice, assistance, as still referring to his son; and when he likewise heard the word *thanks*, he interpreted her *hope* to be merely this, that he would kindly accept of her visit, and her warm expression of thanks for the assistance and kindness she had experienced from his son. Under this impression, his answer—to the no small astonishment of the widow—was, that she had addressed herself to the wrong person, for as nothing of all that his son had done for her, had reached his ears till long afterwards, he could not possibly accept her thanks.—“Now-a-days,” added he, “our young gentlemen are not accustomed to make their parents



their confidants; they are fearful, that every kind of communication on their part will be considered in the light of an account, exacted at their hands, of all their private actions; and they have not the least inclination to submit to such a restraint."

The widow struggled with herself during a long and painful pause; she knew not in what light she should take all this; doubtful whether she should continue the conversation or break it off, she could not regard the entire passing over of the chief point of her address otherwise than as an intentional evasion and refusal; and as far as she could gather from the father's speech respecting his son, he seemed even to disapprove of his conduct. There was, however, a possibility that Mr. Stark had not heard her clearly; she therefore composed her mind, and collected her spirits, in order to resume the conversation in some other way.—She said that Mrs. Herbat

had spoken to her in very warm terms of the friendship which had formerly existed between Mr. Stark and her late father-in-law, old Mr. Lyk, and that she lived full of the hope—

To these words, which Mr. Stark understood perfectly well, he gave the proper reply: that he had known the late old Mr. Lyk from his childhood, that they had continued friends from the time they were playmates at the same school; that afterwards during the whole of his life, their intimacy had never been interrupted; and that, had any occasion called for it, they certainly would have given each other the most lively proofs of their mutual and sincere attachment.—“But,” added he, “such an occasion, heaven be thanked, never presented itself; we both kept our affairs in the best order, and never squandered away our property in revelling and extravagance. Under such circumstances, there will rarely be found an occurrence in which one friend can render

any very particular service to another, much less be called upon to make any important sacrifice."

Although these remarks were by no means intended in the way of flattery, yet they had not the meaning which the widow gave them, and which she was almost necessitated to do, from the misunderstanding above-mentioned—if misunderstanding it could be called. She fancied she heard a bitter reproach against the disorder, in which her deceased husband had allowed his affairs to be involved; she thought she had suffered a second and more painful repulse, and her cheek flushed and became pale by turns. Mr. Stark, who could see but indistinctly without his spectacles, was not at all aware of her situation.

After some moments pause, he resumed:  
"I suppose you did not know your good old father-in-law."

The widow replied in the negative by a silent and faint shake of the head.

“And his wife, old honest Mrs. Lyk?”

“Neither,” replied the widow, by a second shake of the head, for she felt her heart become heavier and heavier, and was not capable of uttering a syllable.

Had Mr. Stark entertained the least idea of the real situation of the widow, which was now become painful in the extreme, and, above all, of the intention with which she had come to him, his humane and generous disposition, added to his respect for the unhappy, would have prompted him carefully to abstain from wounding her feelings, and cautiously to weigh every word that fell from his lips; but as it was, and being ignorant equally of both circumstances, he thought it too good an opportunity to let pass.

without dropping her some useful hints upon female worth and domestic virtue.

“ You had a very great loss in her, madam,” said he ; “ she was a most excellent woman.— She was, in truth, a housewife in the real sense of the word : to be more than that never once entered her head. It was a maxim with her, that man was born for the world, but woman for her husband and her children. Such was the simple belief in which the daughters of that day were brought up ; and if the girls were neither so elegant, nor so delicate, as at present, at least they were more virtuous and much more economical, qualities dearer and of far greater value to the man who wishes to make his way in the world. Old Mr. Lyk has told me many a time, that he considered this excellent wife as the greatest blessing he had received from heaven, and that but for her, he should never have been in the prosperous circumstances he was. No-

thing could be more sincere than the love and respect he bore her; partly perhaps in consequence of the high repute to which she had raised his household; for she was universally allowed to be the best and most experienced manager in the whole town, and in all domestic arrangements was the oracle of all our city dames,—And with all this, she had nothing assuming, still less any thing peevish about her. You should have seen, madam, with what cheerfulness, with what endearing cordiality, she received the guests whom Mr. Lyk almost daily brought with him from the Exchange: and how delighted she was when any of her dishes were relished and praised! Her table was always served in a simple style, but with decency and abundance; and occasionally when her little company were particularly chatty and agreeable, she would question her husband with her eyes—every wink of which was perfectly intelligible to him—and the moment he nodded assent, off she was to the cellar in the twinkling of an eye.

to fetch some of their best old Rhenish, which made us still more joyous and eloquent. —Even so it was, madam; with such loving, cheerful, economical wives, we old-fashioned husbands of that period were perfectly satisfied; and then we called them our *treasure*, our *heart*, our *love*, as in good earnest they were. But in our days, when the style of the citizen approximates more and more to that of the nobility, and here and there borders even upon princely etiquette, these would be downright vulgar and obsolete expressions. I believe the phrase now-a-days used to their spouses is *mon enfant*: but after all, I have my serious doubts whether I should not esteem as most happy the husband of former times with his *treasure*, and his *love*, rather than the modern one with his *enfant*.— But I beg your pardon, madam; I am chattering away, I hardly know for what purpose. Nothing is more natural than that other times should bring with them other manners.—”

In this panegyric upon her late mother-in-law, there were contained so many things calculated to wound her feelings, that the widow now completely gave up the object of her visit, and would instantly have taken her leave of Mr. Stark, had not a sudden giddiness, prevented her rising from the sofa. But suddenly hearing two female voices, one of which she instantly distinguished to be that of Mrs. Herbst, who came in a friendly manner to salute her, she was constrained to make an effort to rise. Mrs. Herbst and her mother had been induced by pure curiosity to break in upon them; one wished to know how matters stood, and to help the widow out in case of need; the other was anxious to become acquainted with a person, who was under so many obligations to her son, and who, as she had heard, was at the same time so very dear to him.

“Heavens! What is the matter with you?” exclaimed Mrs. Herbst, who at the first glance



was aware of the situation of the widow, and rushed forward to assist her. "She is fainting," said Mrs. Stark, quite alarmed.—"Impossible!" cried the old gentleman, full of amazement, whilst the widow slipped from the arms of her friend upon the sofa, and suddenly lay before him like a corpse, without breath, colour, or animation. Mrs. Herbst called aloud for spirits of hartshorn; Mrs. Stark ran to the kitchen for fresh water, while Mr. Stark fetched a bottle of *Hoffmann's* drops, so famous all over Germany. Shortly after, Mr. Schlicht was likewise in motion, and the whole house was one scene of alarm. At length the widow felt so far recovered, as to declare that she was strong enough to walk home on foot and without attendance. But nobody would allow this, and no one opposed it more strongly than Mr. Stark, whose conduct was now so full of attention and so very kind, that she again felt quite puzzled with respect to the opinion he entertained of her.

He had ordered a coach, into which according to his arrangement Mrs. Herbst was to enter first, in order to take the hand of the widow, while from the other side she was to be assisted to her seat. Mr. Schlicht, who, notwithstanding his age, was still very active and vigorous, was ordered to attend her in the carriage, with a precise direction to alight the first when it stopped, in order to assist Mrs. Lyk in descending; but in case she should again become faint, he was first of all to procure more assistance from the house, and by no means to trust too much to his own strength.

“Well?” enquired the old gentleman of his wife, the moment they were alone; “can you tell me what is the meaning of all this? For my part I do not understand a word of it.—This lady calls early in the morning; makes me leave my business, and for aught I know, wished to purchase some bills of exchange for England, or Holland—but after all—what is her

business with me? Nothing in the wide world, but to fall into a fainting fit.—Pray tell me, is this the latest fashion?—Is it the present etiquette at London and Paris to pay such morning visits?”

“How can you talk in this way,” said Mrs. Stark. “A woman’s spirits may be low, and she may easily be taken thus.”

“A woman’s spirits! — But why does not the same thing happen to you, or Mrs. Herbst?”

“Why, surely all constitutions are not equally strong.”

“My dear wife!—If all the women, who are lolling on their couches the whole live-long day, with novels and play-books in their hands, or who squander away their mornings at the toilet, and their evenings at the gaming-table; if all these women, I say, were like you and

Mrs. Herbst, upon their legs early and late, looking attentively to their domestic concerns, I will venture any wager that we should hear no more of such stuff, of your spasms, and giddinesses, and fainting fits.—Once indeed”——and here he shook his finger at her in a threatening kind of way, and then took her old wrinkled hand, in order to press it to his lips——“once indeed; you played me a pretty trick, and in a fearful taking I was.—But that was upon the bed of honour, at the birth of our daughter; and for such kind of fainting fits I have all the respect in the world. There is some head and tail in that.”

“Oh, you sad man!” said Mrs. Stark, with a half smiling and half frowning face. “How can you talk of such things? Besides, these are such old stories!”

## CHAPTER II.

Soon after dinner, the doctor arrived ; partly to enquire after the health, and in part—or in fact really and truly—to sound the sentiments of the old gentleman. He asked, almost with the same breath, “ How do you do ?—How did you like the widow ? ”

The answer to the first question was : “ Very well ! ” and to the second, “ Pretty well.”

“ Do you not think her a very genteel sort of lady ? What say you ? ”

“ Genteel ? Why yes, that may be. Her figure and face are tolerably handsome.—It

may easily be imagined how such a wife could have so far wrought upon a weak and foolish husband, as to lead him to ruin himself for her sake."

The doctor, who had expected a more favourable answer, was somewhat disconcerted by the remark. He however thought it advisable not to make towards his object, as the crow flies, but to take a turn or two on the way. —"She, however, appears to be a woman of very mild and gentle manners."

"Yes, she appears so. There are many things which *appear* in women, dear doctor."

"But there are many things which are realities too."

"That is according as you take it.—They are really that which they are for the time. To-day this, to-morrow that."

“Why, good heavens! you are sadly against the ladies.”

“For them, for them, my good son!—I esteem in that dear sex not only their virtues, but even their weaknesses; but then, mind me, the latter must be allied to the former. The elegant women, the women of fashion, who possess only the failings without the virtues, and, for that very reason, possess the former in the highest degree, these, my dear son—as you must long have observed—these are indeed my abhorrence.”

“And do you think Mrs. Lyk belongs to that class?—”

“That she does still, I cannot pretend to say.”

“I am the physician of the house.—”

“Then you know the state of her health.”

“Yes. But at the same time I also know her way of thinking, her manner, her character. Many secret and confidential moments are passed between ladies and their physicians.—”

“Indeed?—And you can tell this deliberately to my face?

“Why not?”

“To me the father of your wife?—Well, but what if I told her all this?”

“Do so, my dear father, do so, in God’s name. I have not the least objection.”

The tone of frankness and sincerity in which this was uttered, touched the old gentleman, who seized his hand and said;—“My dear good



doctor, you and my daughter make a worthy and excellent pair.—God keep you so!—To say the truth, I have no other comfort in life besides you.”—

He had a great mind to have entered upon a discussion relative to his son, whose prolonged cold and fever began much to displease him; but the doctor would not allow him to drop the subject of the widow.

“Suppose for a moment, my dear Sir,” resumed he, “that this lady was really what she appears to be: amiable, lovely, gentle, and good-natured;—in such a case might not the mad extravagancies of the house of Lyk be explained independantly of her? Might it not easily be imagined that a woman of such a disposition would sacrifice her own inclinations to a vain husband, addicted to nothing but pomp and pleasure? and that merely by his persuasions, without the smallest propensity

on her part, she might have been hurried away from one gay circle, from one party of pleasure to another?"

"This gay life, however, did not commence till after marriage."

"Very naturally! For it is then only that a house becomes a house. The lady constitutes it such."

"The whole display—the equipages—the gay carriages—every thing bespoke not so much a man's as a lady's taste."

"And yet I can assure you, it was solely occasioned by the gentleman."

"Hem!—Some men indeed are women, and worse than women.—"

"So I think! And then, my dear father, what pretensions could the daughter of a poor

country-parson—for such is Mrs. Lyk—who brought neither dowry nor fortune to her husband—what sort of pretensions could she make?”

“Considerable pretensions. I see, my son, you do not understand these things.—The commodity called vain women, has no fixed value; but in their own estimation it bears an immense price. If for a taper figure, or delicate features—and often for less—for a little chattering or affectation, a Baron squanders away his Barony, or an Earl his Earldom—they still fancy they have lost a great deal by the bargain, and have been given away by far too cheaply, for with these qualifications, or rather disqualifications, they feel confident they might have put a whole principality under their imperial sequestration.”

“But the question here is not of a coquette or a mistress, but of a wife.—”

“Of course, of course!”

“And all her happiness or misery, honour or shame, is intimately interwoven with the happiness or misery, the honour or dishonour, of her husband.”

“What, does that ever enter their heads?”

“Here indeed such was the case.—That, in the beginning, a young, and inexperienced country-girl, who never had seen the world before, should plunge headlong into the torrent of pleasure, alive to nothing but the present enjoyment, and never reflecting on the future bitter consequences, will, I trust, be as readily conceived as pardoned by one who knows the human heart so well as you do.”

“But the thing continued—it went on—there was no end of it.”

“Only through the fault of the husband, my dear father.—The lady became indisposed in consequence of her being in a state of pregnancy, and I went almost daily to the house. How often did she protest how odious, how disgusting, this sort of life was to her. How sincerely did she wish to return to that quiet, domestic, active kind of life, to which she had been accustomed from her childhood! But to attempt to persuade her husband to *this*, was an utterly hopeless task, for her very first essay instantly threw him into a most violent passion. She loved her husband; she was weak; she was shy and timid on account of the poverty in which she had come to him, and he, on the other side, was proud, despotic, violent, and but little moved by the tears of his poor wife. I saw this but too well, when, in spite of all her remonstrances, he demanded a sacrifice of her maternal feelings, by not fostering her child at her own breast.”

“And did she consent even to this? Did she yield?”

“What could she do?”—

The old gentleman shook his head.

“In the meantime, this gay course of life proceeded, bringing them nearer and nearer to the abyss: and indeed there must have been a large fortune, to enable him to support such extravagancies during so many years.”

“And so there was! The fortune was immense.”

“The lady, however, became warned by many examples of the kind; she felt anxious for the consequences; but as the features of her husband always wore the same unvarying and cheerful aspect, she, with her usual timidity, concealed all her cares in her own breast.

—At length when real embarrassments broke in upon them, which nothing but the very advantageous sale of the estate could have counteracted, she, by her forcible, tender, and moving representations, effected some small reduction in their expences, together with some promises for the future, which but too soon were again forgotten. Had not death come in time to put a stop to all this, she would, in all probability, have lived to witness the complete ruin of the firm, which would have produced the most terrible, the most abject poverty.”

“ In all probability say you? I would add, with all infallibility.—But that all the fault was the husband’s and not hers—I confess to you, dear doctor, of that I can never be persuaded. I have heard reports that sounded very differently from that.”

“ From whom? let me ask, dear father.—”

“ From”—

From one of the devil's imps he might have said; for just as the name hovered on his lips—



## CHAPTER III.



MR. SPECHT entered the room, and it instantly occurred to the doctor, that he was the very imp in question, whom he ought to encounter. Whether it arose from the smooth, sleek demeanour, and pliant, insinuating manner of Mr. Specht, or from some expressions that had dropped from his brother-in-law, and of which he had some indistinct recollection, certain it is, that his suspicions were at once excited.

Mr. Specht, evidently with a good deal of self-importance, placed a large bag of money upon the table ; extremely proud, as it seemed, to be able to pay the whole of his debt even

to the last farthing, to his much beloved patron, his dear god-father. — He had been a considerable gainer by a little speculation in a commodity, then much in request, and hastened to keep open by prompt payment, a source of accommodation, which a longer delay might perhaps have caused to remain sealed up at some future period.

“My stars!” exclaimed the old gentleman, while Mr. Specht was pouring out the contents of the bag, “what an immense deal of money! This is like the wealth of the man in the gospel. Where did you get all these riches?”

“He, he! My dearest, best Mr. Stark! Always fond of a little joke!—Riches? I am far enough from that, God knows!—But every one does what he can, and if one little grain comes to be put to another—as I once

heard my worthy god-father say—and if you keep adding some fresh grain—”

“ Then there will be a heap in time. Yes, it is very true.”

In the meantime Mr. Specht went bravely on counting his money, and looked about from time to time for young Mr. Stark, whom, this time, in order to shine out before him in all his lustre, he would have seen with as much pleasure, as on other occasions he would have felt happy in escaping from his sight. — The money which was found to be all right, was again put in the bag, and the memorandum, after being cancelled, was returned.

“ Now then,” said the doctor, “ since I see that you have concluded your business, how do you do, Mr. Specht? How do you go on?”

Mr. Specht, with a low bow, describing with his head a sort of serpentine line, thanked the doctor a thousand times for his kind enquiry, and assured him that he was perfectly well.

“And how do they do at home? How is your wife and child?”

“They are all very well, most honoured sir!”

“I am very glad to hear it, Mr. Specht.—And how goes on every thing in your neighbourhood? How is it with Mrs. Lyk?”

“He, he, he! She lives very quietly.—Just as becomes a widow, very quietly.”

“Formerly it was not so quiet there; there was noise enough, was there not?”

“ You may well say that, Doctor Herbst! Noise by day and noise by night ; there was no getting a moment’s rest.—There was hallooing, rattling, pushing, and squeezing, and then the carriages, and the bustle and running of servants ! and, above all, if there was a ball or a masquerade, then what fiddling, piping, and drumming—it was enough to drive one mad. My wife suffered a good deal through it, during the time of her confinement. She did not blame the gentleman so much as the lady, who at least ought to have had some regard for her, and not make such a noise and racket under such circumstances.—She never could bear the lady ever after.—And indeed it was very wicked !—”

“ So it was ! They might surely have given over their rioting for a short six weeks at least. But I wonder how long it will be, before this gay life will commence anew.”

“ dare say there are some excellent reasons

which prevent it!"—He here winked with one of his half-shut eyes, and thought he looked wondrously intelligent.

"How so? The good man has been long enough under ground. The deep mourning is over."

"Very true, but—" Here he shrugged his shoulders, and with the thumb and fore-finger of his right hand imitated the action of counting money into the left.—"My dear sir, where *this* is wanting—"

"Oh, that is another affair: every thing is wanted then. I can readily believe that the good lady helped to empty the coffers of her old father-in-law."

"Helped? He, he, he!"

"But as long as there is any thing left, he

it ever so small,—those people, who in their younger years have not succeeded in learning the secret of keeping accounts, are, as it were, possessed by an evil spirit. They will not rest till every thing to the last farthing is spent. It is not till they see the seals of the court put on their very doors and trunks, that such people ever think of giving in.”

“ This may certainly be the case here ; it is not for me to contradict it.”

The old gentleman, who well saw the drift of his son-in-law, had taken his place in his arm-chair, behind Mr. Specht, and kept himself perfectly quiet.

“ One thing I would give the world to know,” resumed the doctor. “ I do not ask which of the two parties solely and exclusively was guilty of that everlasting feasting, and dancing, and revelling at the house—for I am very well

aware, that both of them were good for nothing—but who was the chief and principal instigator, the husband or the lady?"

"The lady, the lady, my dear sir!"

"Do you really say so?—But as you are the next door neighbour, you must certainly know something about the matter."

"The moment the lady put her foot into the house, these fine doings commenced."

"So they say?—However I lately heard two highly respectable gentlemen discussing that very question, and one of them thought the circumstance which you have just mentioned proved very little or nothing at all; he insisted upon it, that it was not the lady by any means, but wholly and solely the husband, who had done all the mischief; but I must say, this appeared too exaggerated for me."



“ Pah! Whoever said that, most honoured Doctor Herbst, with all respect be it spoken, must be a —”

“ Mind what you are about!” said the old gentleman from his corner. “ Do not say too much!”

“ How so? my dearest god-father? I mean no harm.—The lady is a very genteel-looking person in her appearance, I should almost say very handsome—a thing, by the by, which I dare not for the world say at my house! He, he, he! —and so I thought one of the fashionable young gentlemen, who were always about her—”

“ Might have been smitten with her charms?” exclaimed Mr. Stark, and laughed. “ Very likely! and such a one would not have allowed any thing to be said against her; very naturally!—I myself know a gentleman of the greatest integrity in other respects, who boasts of

confidential moments with certain ladies and he is the same—”

“The very same gentleman to whom the doctor alludes;” said Mr. Specht; “the same gentleman, I dare swear it.”

Mr. Stark and the doctor laughed heartily, and Specht was not behind with his he, he, he, he!—

He wiped his overflowing eyes, and declared, that he was never so happy as when in company with his beloved god-father.

“But my dear Mr. Specht,” resumed the doctor, “let us for a moment talk this matter over seriously. That you should have no foundation for your assertions cannot well be presumed in a man of your character and understanding.—I suppose the late Mr. Lyk, in some

confidential evening hour, opened his heart to you, complaining of his wife, and of his incapability to manage her immoderate propensity for show and extravagance."

" Complained ?—To me?—In a confidential evening hour ?—Oh dear, no !"

" I mean before the door,—smoking a pipe—having a little chat, as neighbours sometimes do, you know."

" O good heavens ! My dear doctor, what are you talking of ? That a man of such weight at the Exchange, that a first-rate merchant, should so far condescend as to be on familiar terms with a little beginner like myself?—No, no ! There is but *one* Mr. Stark, who is kind and affable to every child, and who respects even the humblest citizen : this is his general praise."—

"I am very much obliged to you!" said Mr. Stark.

"As for the other gentlemen,—they almost think it too much to condescend to look at you. The most polite, respectful salutation is returned in a manner and with an air—" He strove to imitate one of these men of proud and contemptuous comportment, but he could not at all succeed; for his flat and common face was only fitted to express the native features of a mind *à la Specht*.

"Well, then I see how it is; the clerks, or some other inmates of the house, who knew these things, have been tattling a little."

"The clerks?—O good heavens! There again you are out. They are, if possible, still more haughty than their masters, or at least more insufferable; for, with all their high wages, what are they?—Servants, says my

wife, nothing more. As for ourselves, says she, although we do feed upon scanty portions, they are cut from our own loaf—but as for these hirelings—not, however, that it is my wish to hurt any body—” added he with timidity.

“ All very right, Mr. Specht, all very fine ; but you have not yet answered my question.— You have learned the lady’s disposition, and her propensity for dissipation, neither from her husband, nor from any confidential friend of the house—then, give me leave to ask you, by what means did you learn it ?”

“ Why by auricular confession,”—said the old gentleman, somewhat sharply ; for he already began to suspect that his god-son had deceived him.—“ Mrs. Lyk is a catholic in secret, and Specht is her father confessor.”

“ Heaven preserve us !”—exclaimed Mr.

Specht, starting back with true protestant horror: "If our chief pastor were to hear this! or, what is still worse, my wife!—I a father confessor!"

The laugh of the two gentlemen, although somewhat discordant as far as it regarded Mr. Stark, soon made Specht recover his composure. "No," said he, "what I know, I know from a very legitimate and very authentic source."

"Well?—May I be permitted to know?"

"Scarcely had I brought to Mr. Stark the first reports of the mad doings at the house of my neighbour Lyk, when my respected godfather immediately exclaimed; that's the wife's doing! These are the fruits of the new-fashioned education of our ladies. There will be another house ruined by dancing and revelling, and such a noble house too!—And when I repeated this

at table, my wife instantly exclaimed : He is in the right, this worthy god-father of yours ! He is perfectly right !”

“ So, so ! Well, that is good upon my life ! And so you have ever since quietly set down all these extravagancies to the account of the lady !”

“ Good Lord ! How could I do otherwise ? You will acknowledge that I am bound to believe the word of my dear god-father ; for *he* is a man of experience, he knows how the world moves—he knows every thing.”

“ Are you mad ?” exclaimed Mr. Stark, whilst to the no small alarm of poor Specht, he rose very angrily from his chair.

“ My dearest, and most worthy god-father—”

“ Well, upon my life, that is a very good

joke," said the doctor. "You, my dear father, have the story from Mr. Specht, and Mr. Specht has the story from you."

The doctor received a very unfriendly look, and the god-son, who stood quite petrified, one perfectly annihilating.

"You are"—muttered the old gentleman between his teeth—"with all your politeness and bows—" Here he checked himself, snatched the bag of money from the table, and left the room.



## CHAPTER IV.



“SUCH is the gratitude of the world!” exclaimed the doctor, while the handkerchief of Mr. Specht was in full activity; “such is the reward one gets for all one’s wearisome walks, for all one’s carefully collected reports.”

“My worthy Doctor Herbst,” said Mr. Specht, and turned his eyes towards heaven:—“if I am not as innocent as a new-born child—”

“O that you are! I will be sworn to it.”

“If my dear god-father did not tell me syllable for syllable just as I told it,”—he

placed his hand upon his breast, as if preparing for a solemn asseveration—

“Do not swear, Mr. Specht! I believe you, and precisely on account of your innocence.—My father-in-law told you every thing, that you say he did,—perhaps more—but do you know why?—Because, just at that period, two very respectable commercial houses had been ruined, and, as was well known by the whole town, entirely through the vanity and dissipation of the ladies, but who resembled Mrs. Lyk just about as much as vice does virtue. One of them was a run-away foreigner, and the other a dancer from the opera. The men who choose such women for their wives are downright fools.—These occurrences weighed heavily upon the old gentleman’s heart; Mrs. Lyk was likewise a stranger in the town, and quite unknown to him.—What he said to you, was to be understood only as a question not to be answered thoughtlessly, and so

pertinaciously to the disadvantage of a worthy woman—for such at least she *might* have been, and such she *is*.”

“ But I knew it not, most respected sir, I knew as little as Mr. Stark—”

“ You knew therefore, that you knew nothing—and that very thing, Mr. Specht, was the truth, which you, like an honest man, ought to have avowed.”—

“ But, my dear Sir, do you not see, that I should thus have contradicted—”

“ Well? And if you had contradicted?”

“ Such a man? My god-father? Impossible!”

“ Truth, Mr. Specht—and mark this for the future,—truth, according to the best of

your knowledge you owe not only to your honour, but also to your happiness. You will always find it the best policy.—It is the manner in which we speak the truth, that makes all the difference; in other respects, it is to be spoken equally to the king and to the beggar.”

“ But, my dear doctor!, If you but saw with my eyes !”

“ You are very good !”

“ Figure me to yourself sitting alone, full of anxiety for my wife and child, musing and pondering on what is best to be done, and uncertain what to do? When a moment after I enter such a house, and cast my eyes on all the large chests, and bales of merchandise; when I see the running and bustle of the people, the numerous waggons loading and unloading, and such teams of fine horses—Oh, my worthy sir, one is then filled with such respect!—How in

heaven's name, could I have the courage to breathe a single syllable?"

The doctor looked sternly at the man who stood before him, and was resolved not to waste another word upon such a being.—He, however, promised him, at his anxious solicitation, to intercede with the old gentleman in his behalf; prescribed a sedative draught, which he was to procure at the next apothecary's, and wished him a good day.

## CHAPTER V.



ALTHOUGH it was true, that Mr. Stark had been more deceived by his prejudices, than by his simpleton of a god-son, still the bare suspicion of the latter, was most mortifying to him, and the more so, as on this occasion he had lost his composure of mind, whereby he had confirmed that suspicion; besides he was well aware, that he could have passed off the whole affair in a jesting way, according to his usual method. This fault however,—if fault it was—did him honour: for it was grounded much less upon his mortified self-love, than upon the uprightness of his heart, which at once bitterly upbraided him with all the injustice he had committed against the

widow, and presented to him the man who had co-operated in it, no longer in a ridiculous, but in an odious, point of view.

Mrs. Herbst, who partly by means of the widow, and partly by that of her husband, was perfectly well acquainted with every thing that had passed, thought it advisable to profit by the disposition of mind in which she naturally supposed her father to be. She paid him a visit of very short duration, so short indeed, that she did not even sit down; yet during this passing visit, she contrived to touch with a skilful hand all the chords, which she knew to be most sensibly alive in her father's heart. Her pretext for this visit, was grounded on the request which the old gentleman had made in the morning at parting, that she would bring him news of the health of the widow.

“Excuse me, my dear father, for having

been so tardy in obeying your command ; but some business which I could not put off, rendered it impossible for me to do so in the forenoon ; besides I did not stop long with the widow at that time, but this afternoon I remained there somewhat longer ; I have but just left her, and I must confess with a very heavy heart."

"How so?" enquired Mr. Stark with a considerable degree of interest. "Has she had another fit?"

"No sir. She does not suffer so much in body as in mind. The poor widow is trembling under impending ruin ; among her creditors there is a certain Mr. Horn, who is determined either to obtain his money, or proceed at once against her."

"Mr. Horn?—If she has to do with that man—"



“ Alas, she has !”

“ Then I pity the good woman ! With him there is no indulgence to be hoped for.—But is Mrs. Lyk then still involved in embarrassments ? I thought your brother had arranged every thing.”

“ So I thought too ; but—perhaps he may have fixed terms which cannot now be exactly complied with.”

“ I should be sorry for that.”

“ Or there may be other unpleasant circumstances, which, if I possessed an insight into commercial affairs, I should perhaps be able to guess at.”

“ Oh, do not trouble your head about this, child, there are many things possible, under such circumstances.”

"Now, at least, I know for what purpose the widow came here this morning to see you."

"Well?"

"On account of this very embarrassment with respect to Mr. Horn.—She could not invite my brother to her house in consequence of his indisposition; and to pay a visit to an unmarried gentleman would not have been decorous. Still the affair was urgent, and the widow—I am repeating her own words—encouraged by the generous conduct of my brother, of whom she never speaks but with the deepest gratitude, felt all her confidence as it were linked to the name of Stark. On this occasion, therefore, she wished to solicit from the father, what circumstances did not permit her, to ask of the son, namely: advice, help, interposition, assistance."

“And why did she not mention it?”

“She tells me, she did so.”

“No!”

“Oh, I am sure she spoke, but—”

“No!” repeated Mr. Stark with an emphasis which showed that his ill humour had not yet left him.

“I suppose, my good, my kind father, did not hear her well, did not understand her.”

“Why then she surely could not have been speaking, but muttering. This stupid habit of muttering becomes worse every day. When I was a young man, every body spoke out boldly.—I make no doubt, but things will soon come to such a pass, that people will expect one to hear their *thoughts*!”

"The poor thing is so timid; you must pardon her. Besides you were the means of making her still more timid."

"I?—Do you know what you are saying?—I am not in the habit of intimidating those who come to solicit a favour at my hands: on the contrary, I encourage them, and give them an attentive hearing, and if I can render a service without too great a disadvantage to myself, I do so willingly and without farther preamble. I could never comprehend the unworthy and miserable art of endeavouring to lend a value to small services by shrugging up the shoulders, by wry looks, and by long considerations about it. Surely Mrs. Herbst ought to have known as much, and to have told the widow so."

"And did I not do so?—Pray do not be angry, dear father."

"Angry! You will make me so in good

earnest. I do not know what ails you to-day."

"Alas! I did wrong; I think so myself.—Had I reflected better upon it, I should not have come out at all. I am so low spirited."

"About the widow?"

"Yes!—And then, as the smallest circumstances often touch the heart most deeply—"

"Well?"

"Before entering Mrs. Lyk's room, the door of which stood half open, I chanced to see the interior reflected in the opposite looking-glass.—'There she sat, poor woman, crouched up in a corner of the sofa, her arm supported by one of the cushions, and a handkerchief in her hand to dry her eyes. At her side were sitting, each upon his little stool, her two dear innocent

children, who at other times I always found playing so cheerfully around her, but who now appeared to have forgotten all their little sports. They remained so silent, looking with downcast eyes into their laps, as if they partook in their poor mother's grief; and when she heaved a heavy sigh, they both looked up into her face, with such an expression in their eyes! in their large, blue, heavenly eyes! with such anxiety, such tenderness, such earnestness!—I thought of my own little ones, and of you. Had you but seen this, my best of fathers!"—She drew forth her handkerchief and applied it to her eyes.

"Are they then really such gentle and amiable children?" enquired the old gentleman, in a tone which was at once perfectly mild again.

"O yes! so amiable and so well-bred!—It is true she has but these two to attend to, while I have a greater number; yet still in the art of

education I must acknowledge her to be my mistress. She rules her little ones with a nod, a simple glance, and never in anger, but always in love.—But while I stand chattering here, I forget that my little ones are in want of their supper.—I must be off, dear father. Good evening! Pardon me, if to-day I have infected you with my bad humour! I promise never to do it again. Good evening!"—She kissed his hand, and disappeared.

The heart of the old man was of so excellent a soil itself, and by recent agitation had been so well loosened and prepared, that it naturally received into its bosom the scattered seeds of pity, and was ready to bring forth abundant fruits.—He could not eat his supper, he could not sleep at night; the little group, which his daughter had been describing, hovered constantly before his eyes, and it appeared to him as if he ought to hasten without delay in order to take the handkerchief from the

widow's hands, and press the dear little orphans in his arms.

Besides this picture, there was also another consideration which not a little disturbed him, and caused him frequently to toss and turn from one side of his bed to the other.—“The widow felt her confidence as it were linked to the name of Stark.”—This appeared to him little less than a bond, a bill of exchange, which a confidence in virtue had drawn upon his honour, and which he could not possibly do otherwise than accept.—“She wished to solicit from the father, what circumstances did not permit her to ask from the son.”—How could he for a moment suppose that a father should remain behind-hand with a son in point of generosity; especially when he had so often upbraided that son with narrowness of heart?—The name of the lady, too, which reminded him of that most intimate of all his friends, the good, honest Lyk; her great repugnance to solicit the aid of strangers, which



had produced such an effect upon her spirits, as even to cause her to faint, a circumstance regarded by him as a certain proof of a generous mind; her tears, in part, perhaps, occasioned by certain turns he had given to the conversation; the many wrongs which prejudice had led him to heap upon her in the form of satirical sallies, that she did not in the least deserve, and for which his own heart demanded satisfaction, although they never had reached the ear of the innocent sufferer; the occasion which had offered itself in her house of bringing to light the hidden excellencies of his son's character, a circumstance that had been to him a source of so much joy:—all these, and similar considerations, kept him awake till past midnight, and even then his sleep was rather an unquiet slumber, than a profound repose.

CHAPTER VI.

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"THIS way, Mr. Schlicht!" said Mr. Stark the following morning, his face still betraying the effects of the anxiety of the past night.—

"I wish to have a little conversation with you; and in this room,"—opening the door of his private room — "here we shall be the least disturbed."

The old clerk, whose conscience was not quite clear, did not much relish this address. He had a great aversion to this said chamber, on account of sundry scenes in times past; for it was there he had had many a wearisome discussion with Mr. Stark; and at this very moment he dreaded an examination, whereby the

falsehood of his assertion, that his young master was still indisposed might be detected. Therefore, like a frightened school-boy, he masked his fear under the appearance of a bold defiance, and proudly asked: "What is your pleasure, sir?"

We should observe that the worth of Mr. Schlicht was as sterling as old gold; and when the interest of his good old benefactor clashed with any other interest abroad, he was capable of giving up life itself for his sake. But if a conflict of interests arose in the house, then he was sure to take part with the children against the father, nay, would have even done so with regard to the mother. As for the children, he had loved them ever since their birth, he had dandled them a thousand times in his arms, had obliged them by numberless little favours and kindnesses, and had received in return as many caresses and proofs of their early attachment. Even at the pre-

sent day, grown up as they were, they still called him their good old father, a name which excited the sweetest emotions in the bosom of the old bachelor of seventy, who, with the best disposition in the world, had never the happiness to become a married man, and have children of his own. Besides this, the grateful children of Mr. Stark, never forgot, what he himself regularly did,—his birthday; at least Mrs. Herbst was sure to remind her brother of it, and then this was a day full of mirth and festivity; and frequently did old Mr. Schlicht shed tears of joy over the presents that they showered upon him so abundantly, and which had been judiciously selected with a view to his comforts; and often on these occasions, when prompted by gratitude, he was about to kiss the hands of Mrs. Herbst, she would offer him her smiling lips. By such ties, which were far more tender, and, on that very account, far more powerful than those arising from the

respect which he bore to his benefactor, he was indissolubly attached to both the children. As a proof of the sincerity of his regard, he had deposited a document at the town-registry, by which he had constituted them sole heirs to the not unimportant property, which he had amassed during a service of so many years.—

Actuated by this attachment, Mr. Schlicht had often connived at many a secret evasion of the son, before the latter, by increasing years, became more confident and acted with less disguise; and when any thing unpleasant was discovered, he had had many a hard tug with the old gentleman in this very room. At this moment he was again the confidant of the son, and had himself given orders for putting the horses to the chaise, in which, two days before, the young gentleman had taken a trip to the country-house of a friend; for from the very outset, it was to him insupportable to have a

fever without either cold or heat, and to sit like a culprit immured the whole day within four walls. Ever since his departure, Mr. Schlicht had been in a state of great anxiety, lest the old gentleman, should become acquainted with the fact, and load him with reproaches, on account of the false reports he had spread respecting his young master.

However for this once, his fears were unfounded.—“ I have something particular,” said Mr. Stark, “ to carry which into effect, I want a man upon whom I may confidently rely, and who at the same time has had some experience, and is well versed in commercial affairs.”

These cheering words were comfort and balm to the heart of poor Mr. Schlicht. To hear a compliment paid to his knowledge and experience, was never a matter of indifference to him, but at the present moment it was doubly acceptable. “ Command me, command me, my dear

Mr. Stark," said he, while he approached close to his master, as if anxious to catch every syllable that fell from his lips.— He was now made acquainted with the real object of Mrs. Lyk's visit of yesterday ; he was told of her unpleasant situation with respect to Mr. Horn, and perhaps with other creditors, of the whole of which Mr. Stark was desirous of knowing the particulars ; he heard of the great services which his young master had rendered the house of Lyk, and the wish of the old gentleman to finish the good work begun by his son, and to put an end to all the widow's embarrassments by employing his credit in her behalf.

The good Schlicht was so full of joy on account of all that had been confided to him, and still more for the honour that had been paid to his confidence, that Mr. Stark was scarcely able to stem the increasing torrent of eloquence, which the old clerk began to pour forth at every part of this narration. " Only hear me," ex-

claimed Mr. Stark, "we shall not have done before night!"

But how suddenly was this torrent arrested in its course, when Mr. Stark added, that he did not intend to go blindly to work, but above all things wished to know from his son, whether the monies due to the firm would be sufficient to satisfy the creditors, and what time this liquidation would take. "As my son," said he, "has examined all the ledgers, and consequently has a thorough knowledge of the real situation of the firm, it will doubtless be much better to hear it from him than from the widow or her clerk, who possibly might not be so active or skilful as could be wished.—Therefore, go instantly upstairs to my son, and obtain from him an exact and detailed explanation of every point in question,"—and here Mr. Stark repeated these points slowly and distinctly—"do you understand me, Mr. Schlicht? A very exact and detailed explanation.—I must now be off; but



I shall return in an hour at the latest, and shall then expect your answer. According to its tenor, I shall afterwards instruct you what you are to do."

It would have been impossible for Mr. Stark not to observe the sudden and total eclipse that overshadowed the countenance of the old clerk, and to become sensible that every thing was not right, had not at this identical moment—and very fortunately for Mr. Schlicht—the old house-clock struck, and by its first alarm given an entirely new direction to the ideas of the old gentleman. It was the latest moment for going on 'Change, where Mr. Stark had some important business to transact that day, and therefore could not be too expeditious in proceeding thither. With a short and abrupt, "Good bye! Look to this business!" he hastily seized his stick and hat, and left the poor hopeless and helpless Schlicht, who stood there immovable as a statue, looking after the old gentleman and repeat-

ing the single word: "Yes,"—into which the whole torrent of his eloquence had dwindled, and even this monosyllable was squeezed forth only at long intervals, and in a tone that was scarcely audible.

## CHAPTER VII.



IN the anxiety of his heart to maintain the honourable confidence of his master, and in his uncertainty how to act, poor Mr. Schlicht wandered about the house like one deranged: and at length found his way to his young master's room, without being at all conscious for what purpose.—One may imagine his astonishment, when, on opening the door, he found the object of all his painful anxiety, sitting at the table with his head resting on his elbow. He blessed himself before he ventured nearer, and asked him, with a trembling voice, if it was really himself?

“Do you think I am a ghost?” said young Mr. Stark.

" Oh good heavens ! if it were not clear daylight, I should be tempted to do so.—How, for goodness' sake, came you here ?"

" Why, that way, my dear Schlicht, through the back-gate."

" How?—Was it then open ?"

" Wide open."

" Why then the deuce must have taken the hostler ! The rascal had been bringing in wood, and so left the gate wide open."

Mr. Schlicht, in his economical rage, was about to descend instantly in order to give the hostler a severe scolding.—" But my good old father," said young Mr. Stark, "are you not glad of it, since it was only this way I could have entered the house without being seen?"

"O yes," replied Mr. Schlicht, "I am exceedingly glad of it! And I will give him something handsome for his trouble;—but first I must rate him soundly, and see if every thing is right. There is a gang of young thieves now about the town."—And off he went.

The secret of the early return of young Mr. Stark was no other than his affection for the widow, which had now matured itself into an unalterable attachment. This rendered him unfit for society, and made every company dull to him. His friend, who soon guessed the cause of his melancholy, endeavoured by all possible means to divert and cheer him; he started suitable topics in order that his guest might have occasion to display his commercial knowledge; he tried to tempt him to rural sports; he proposed a variety of amusing domestic pastimes, which never fail to produce laughter and good humour: but all in vain. When the conversation turned upon Java, Mr. Stark's reply was about Jamaica;

when in the fields, he did not take the least notice of the hares, which had been purposely driven almost under his very feet; and with the amusements within doors he was so out of humour, and behaved so awkwardly, that they were discontinued almost as soon as begun. At last, as it may well be supposed, the ungrateful task of attempting to amuse him became tiresome in the extreme; and Mr. Stark must indeed have been the most absent of men not to perceive, that he became burthensome to his friend, and—what mortified him still more—ridiculous to the rest of the company. He, therefore, without delay, got all things ready, and as early as the third day took leave of his kind host, who, indeed, for decency's sake, upbraided him with his early departure, but who, to say the truth, was heartily glad to get rid of him.

Young Mr. Stark now felt the fullest, the most complete, conviction, that it was in vain

for him to struggle against his passion. There was one of three things which might possibly occur in consequence of his love for the widow ; and he had already resolved to act accordingly. If the father were to refuse his consent, but the widow to give hers, then he would make an arrangement with the guardians of the children, marry the widow, live in her house, and undertake the business, with the circumstances of which he had, of course, become intimately acquainted. Should the father crown his ardent wishes—though he durst not venture to flatter himself so far—by spontaneously approving his choice; for a forced consent, or what was still worse, one obtained by begging, would never do for him—in this case he would dispose of the business of Lyk, in the depressed state it was then in, on as advantageous terms as possible, and take the beloved object of his affection to the home of his father, where he would then apply himself with redoubled zeal to the business, live only for that and his love, and

thus convince his father, that he was deficient neither in talents nor in virtue. If, unfortunately the widow herself, she for whom he had done so much, and whom he loved so tenderly, if she should prove adverse to his wishes—then he would not remain a single instant longer in a place where the woman of his choice would be constantly before his eyes, without the hope of his ever possessing her ; or where, perhaps, he might be condemned to the torture of seeing a third person happy in her arms, the very thought of which caused a chillness to thrill through his whole frame. In this case he would proceed to Bremen, according to his original intention, where every thing was already prepared for his reception, and where he still kept up a correspondence with his agent to that effect.

Thus far the determination of young Mr. Stark stood firm and unshaken, and this already tended in some measure to calm his mind. And yet the uncertainty as to which



of these possible cases might occur, still kept him in that gloomy and irritable tone of mind in which old Schlicht had surprised him. To rid himself at once of this painful uncertainty, he had come to the resolution of repairing, the moment his father had sat down to dinner, to the house of his brother-in-law, who already knew the secret of his heart, and who appeared to him worthy of his full and unreserved confidence. With him he wished to consult as to the best means of sounding the sentiments of the widow, and at the same time those of his father.

## CHAPTER VIII.

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"ALL is now right! All is right!" said Mr. Schlicht, as he entered rubbing his hands, and with a countenance as merry as before.—"The knave has got his reprimand and his money: the rascally negligent fellow!"

"The reprimand you might have spared," said young Mr. Stark.

"Oh no! say rather the money! for that he had merited by mere chance: the former he really deserved.—Oh I am so glad, so glad that you are returned, my dear, dear sir! I was in so much trouble!"

"About me? Nothing ails me, my good father."

"Yes, but something ailed *me*, though. For heaven's sake, do but guess the commission my old master has given me!"

"What commission?"

"I was to go up stairs to *you*—to you whom I knew not to be in the house! Now do but imagine my confusion! I was to go to you, and enquire very strictly and circumstantially about the state of the firm of Lyk, and bring him a direct answer."

"What do you say?" exclaimed young Mr. Stark, springing with great emotion from his seat.

"Yes, sir!—Whether the monies due to

the firm would satisfy the creditors, and what time would be required for such a liquidation of the debts?"

"Schlicht!"—He grasped the old clerk by both his arms.—"You were to ask *me* about this?—*me*?"

"Whom else?—Your father knows of all your visits to the widow. It seems that she herself spoke to him about it."

"She herself?—By heavens, I am inclined to think all is not right with you, old man; you are not in your sound senses!—How came my father at the widow's?"—

"Hark ye, young gentleman," said Mr. Schlicht, shaking his head angrily; "let me beg of you to leave out of the question my not being in my sound senses. Old as I am,

I thank heaven, I have as good a use of my five senses as the best among you."

"But once more Schlicht!—Answer me, and then be as angry as you will! How came my father at the widow's?"

"Did I say that *he came to her*? No, she came to *him*."

"She came to him?"

"Yesterday forenoon! Here: to this house. And unpleasantly enough she went out of it."

"How?" cried young Mr. Stark, and blushed deeply.

"Or rather pleasantly enough! For Mrs. Herbst and I took her home in a coach."

"In a coach? For what?"—He grew pale while he asked it.

"Why, to be sure, she was taken with a fainting fit; the poor woman! I could have sworn she would never have opened her eyes again till doomsday."

"Oh, my God!—Perhaps the prognostic of an illness, of a mortal illness!"

"Nonsense!"—Here he tossed his head with an air of importance.—"There was nothing she thought less of than of illness. Scarcely had she reached home, when she grew as brisk as a lark."

"Is this correct? Is it true?"

"Is Schlicht capable of a falsehood?—But I must tell you, my dearest sir, what great, what inexpressible joy was mine."

"Yours?"

"Yes; your father spoke of you in such terms!"—Here the old man affected a pathetic tone of voice:—"My son has acted so uprightly—my son has conducted himself so nobly—my son has shown such generosity!—Look you, my dear sir, I never before heard your father speak of you in such a manner."

Young Mr. Stark would fain have felt somewhat ashamed, could the pleasure of the moment have given place to such a feeling. He saw the mist which hovered over his future destinies dissipating by degrees; he saw the dearest of his wishes ripening into hope; and he now began to assail poor old Schlicht with a thousand questions, nearly the whole of which remained unanswered. — "Could I only learn," said he at last, "what in the world brought the widow here? What was her object, her intention?"

“ Oh, as to that matter I can satisfy you from what I heard drop from the lips of my old master himself. She feels herself placed in an unpleasant situation on account of a certain Mr. Horn, who it seems deals hardly with her.”

“ Horn?” cried young Mr. Stark, stamping his foot violently on the floor.—“ Oh, that detestable, miserly wretch! Then, after all, he did not keep his word, though I had wrung it from him with so much difficulty, and after such pressing intreaties! — Fool that I was!—Why did I not pay the trifle at the time?—And now, what has my father resolved to do? What is his intention?”

“ He has made up his mind to assist the widow! — I shall hear all about it, as soon as he returns from 'Change.”

“ Will he stop there long think you?”



"I should think he would. He seemed to have business of importance on hand. He was in a great hurry."

"Then I will step down to my mother. Perhaps she may know more about the matter, than you do, my dear old fellow. Or, if she knows nothing, I'll hasten to my brother-in-law, to my sister, to the widow herself!"

"Stop! stop!" cried Mr. Schlicht, and happily caught his young master by the skirts of his coat. "Come, come; this will not do, young gentleman. You must not think to escape me thus. First tell me exactly and circumstantially whether the monies due to the firm will satisfy the creditors?"

"Satisfy? satisfy said you? My dear Schlicht, there will remain a considerable sum in hand, when all is settled."

"Very well?—And the time this liquidation may require?"

"Not more than three or four months at the farthest."

"Very good.—But now there are some other circumstances, about which I should like to be informed: in the first place—"

The young gentleman was off like a shot.

"Why he is gone!" muttered Mr. Schlicht, as he looked after him, and shook his head.—

"This is really too bad. There is something more here than meets the eye.—Young gentleman! young gentleman! you have been looking too closely into the young widow's eyes! You are over head and ears in love.—Well, and if it should be so, where is the harm of it? She is a comely and excellent woman that is certain,—and if he is fond of her—she is

extremely well bred that I can answer for ; with what politeness did she thank me yesterday, and call me one dear Mr. Schlicht after another !—Well, if he is fond of her—why should he not take her for his wife? Who shall hinder him? Go on! go on young gentleman! Courage, my dear sir! The life of a bachelor is a 'tiresome thing after all.—Ha, ha!—Then I who dote so fondly upon children, may still, even at seventy, have something to fondle and caress!—In heaven's name! I only wish I could see them now, the sweet puppets, and that they were able to toddle around me."

## CHAPTER IX.



THERE was little or nothing to be learned from the mother, and therefore young Mr. Stark hastened through the back-gate, which he desired Mr. Schlicht to open for him, on his way to his sister; for if he had taken the other direction, he might have chanced to meet his father.

MRS. Herbst, who had known of her brother's trip, was surprised at seeing him returned. She could not deny herself the pleasure of teasing the impatient lover a little about his courtship: she affected a curiosity not less intense than his passion, and in return to all his questions about the widow, she was

ready with counter-questions about his late journey. But at length her kind and sisterly heart yielded, and she made him happy beyond description by the disclosure, that, in her opinion, as well as that of her husband, the widow was in all probability as much in love as he. In beholding her brother thus smitten with the widow, she felt that lofty satisfaction, that proud feeling, which every woman experiences at the sight of the homage paid by the lord of the creation, when he languishes a captive in her fetters; but she felt at the same time, like all good-natured ladies, a lively desire to put a speedy termination to the pangs of the poor sufferer, however interesting and engaging they might be to the beholder. She pledged him her hand and her promise, that she would leave nothing unattempted, as far as her means went, to bring the vessel of his love happily into haven, did not wind and weather too obstinately oppose it.

When the doctor arrived he was informed of the three resolutions which young Mr. Stark had made, to be acted upon as either of the three before mentioned circumstances should fall out. The doctor insisted that, above all things, he ought to come to an understanding with his father, and resume his place in the counting-house, under which circumstances the consent of his father to his marriage with the widow would certainly not be withheld. Mr. Stark on the contrary wished, first of all, to ascertain the sentiments of the widow respecting himself, in order to be able to determine whether he should leave the place, or not, and how he should act and declare himself relative to his father. He said he was determined under no circumstances, be his fate what it might, to resume his old position with his father; and as for obtaining his consent to his marriage, he knew his unconquerable obstinacy, when prejudices had once deeply rooted themselves in his mind.

The doctor now informed him how far the prejudice, which the old gentleman had conceived against the widow, was already weakened, and once more insisted that the first step which ought to be taken was a reconciliation with his father, who from this time forward, would certainly live with him upon a different footing. A relapse into his former habits and mode of conduct, he thought, was by no means to be feared, provided the son himself did not revive those feelings by his own behaviour. As to whether he was really beloved by his father, there was no question on that head. The only thing to be lamented was, that hitherto this love had been defective in one most indispensable requisite, and this deficiency had been the cause of all the vexatious differences and consequent animosity that had arisen between them.

Young Mr. Stark said that he did not clearly understand the doctor's meaning, and begged

an explanation; this his brother-in-law consented to give, if he would solemnly promise not to be offended at his frankness.—This promise was immediately given.

“Well then,” said the doctor, “the love of your father to you was defective in one particular; but happily this defect is now in a great degree supplied, and you will have it in your power daily to confirm him in his better opinion. I speak of a due esteem for your character.”

“True! very true! He has always despised me.”

“It has always been his wish to be able to hold you in the highest esteem.—Ask yourself in what degree you have rendered it possible for him to do so.”

“Did I ever do any thing to bring shame



upon him?" exclaimed the young man, with great emotion. "Has ever my conduct been guilty or flagitious?"

"Is the question here of guilt?—Would you be ready to esteem that man, whose only claim to your estimation was his not having disgraced himself by flagitious deeds? Is nothing more wanted to ensure the esteem of the generous and noble-minded?"

The joy of Mr. Schlicht, when describing the manner in which his father had spoken of him, at this moment crossed the mind of young Mr. Stark; he became calm again, and resumed his seat.

"You gave me your word," continued the doctor, "that you would pardon my frankness, and allow me once for all to state to you my ideas on this point.—Your father does not consider you as a bad, but as a weak man; as one

whose disposition inclines to sensuality, effeminacy, and vanity. Indeed, according to what he saw of you, and heard respecting you, he could scarcely view you in any other light; he was in a manner compelled so to do, for the better traits of your character were concealed from his view. He thought you the most complete contrast to himself: and let him be as severely impartial as he would, he could not look upon himself otherwise than the whole world does, that is with the eyes of approbation and esteem. Hence his behaviour towards you; a behaviour which is really wounding, vexatious, and mortifying in the highest degree; which I have always disliked, which I would never manifest in the case of a son of my own, whatever might be my opinion respecting him, and which in fact I *could* not, because I am not sufficiently gifted with the wit and humour necessary for it; but which, from the cast of the old gentleman's mind and heart, was so natural to him, that not the least change could ever be hoped, as long as

he considered you in the same light as formerly. To make him change this manner, there was no other way than to make him change his opinion respecting you ; and that"—he here took the hand of his brother-in-law, and pressed it with much warmth—" that is changed."

Young Mr. Stark had listened with calmness, and still remained silent. The doctor now confessed that he had related to the old gentleman the whole history of his reconciliation with the late Mr. Lyk, and of all that had subsequently happened, and described the great emotion of old Mr. Stark, not without being strongly moved himself.—" Approach him now," said he, " and you will be received with other looks. Speak to him, and he will answer you in a quite different tone.—Indeed, my dear brother, even if you still retained all those little—weaknesses I will call them—at which he formerly railed, he would rail at them no longer ; he would still wish that they were abandoned, but he would

joyfully overlook them in the generous, disinterested, and noble-minded man, that he now acknowledges you to be. All that is now wanted is a meeting, reconciliation, and confidence;—and I pledge you my honour, that you will be more to him in future than all of us put together. Bring him any consort of your choice, and he will accept her as his daughter; you will be the master of all your actions, as long as you act in the same spirit as you have done since the death of Mr. Lyk; your father will no longer be to you a censor, a scrutinizing moralizer, he will be only a loving friend, a tender parent.”

Although young Mr. Stark had listened to all this with the utmost pleasure, not only as a lover, but also as a son, whose feelings of nature and duty, however they might have been weakened, had never been extinguished; still he received it more as an agreeable illusion than a well-founded hope. He persevered in his

opinion, that his first step ought to be to assure himself of the sentiments of the widow, in order to be able to declare his love to his father, immediately on the proposed reconciliation being effected; since this would be of no duration, if his love should afterwards be disapproved, or, of no utility, if the widow herself should reject his hand. In the latter case he was irrevocably determined to change the place of his abode.—They still continued to discuss the point; but each of them, as is usually the case in such matters, adhered firmly to his own opinion, till Mrs. Herbst, who had been absent, engaged in some domestic affairs, re-entered and told them dinner was ready. She added, that, she had ordered the children to have their dinner in the nursery, that they might remain alone and undisturbed, and be able to deliberate together at full liberty.

The subject of the discussion between the doctor and young Mr. Stark was now laid

before the lady for her opinion, and after a moment's reflection, she decided *for* and *against* both.—“ You cannot agree together, because you are men, in other words, because you are two headstrong beings, who, when you have once taken a view of an object, always adhere to the first impression made upon you.—Good heavens! Only combine both your opinions, and you will come to the point immediately.”

“ How combine them?” asked both of them at once. “ How can that be done?”

“ Ah! Were it not for us women!”

“ Ye sweet peace-makers!” exclaimed the doctor, laughing.

“ That we are, sir, with all your laughing. You shall see the proof of it immediately. You, my dear brother, are determined, first of all, to be assured of the love of the widow, before you

intend to speak with our good father. Is it not so?"

"Even so."

"And you, my lord and spouse, you wish first of all to see my brother reconciled to his father, before he concludes with the widow."

"Exactly so."

"Well then, what do you dispute about? There are no difficulties in the case. Both these things, can be combined extremely well! I will undertake, my dear brother, to procure for you the most indubitable assurance of the widow's consent, without however asking for it in express terms; and when you have obtained this, you will be pleased, first of all, to approach our good father, before you make your overture to the widow. You will then hear all, and, according to what you hear, you will act. In

this manner, the father can have no cause to complain that his son had neglected him, and the son need not be apprehensive of any embarrassment either from one side, or the other.—Can any thing be imagined more easy and simple?"

"But I do not see," said the doctor, "how you will be able to ascertain the consent of the widow, without a formal proposal."

"Poor man! So you really do not see it?—Tell me, if you please, the name which you lately gave to that cast of face, by which you know before-hand with certainty that your patient will die?"

"A *Hippocratic* face.—Was that the name?"

"Something of that kind.... Yes, it sounded something like it.—Well, the liberty of poor



maidens and widows, when on the point of expiring has just such a hip—hip—how do you call it?"

"A *Hippocratic* face."

"Exactly so.—And on this point, we women—I mean to say, we sensible ones—understand these matters just as well as you learned doctors with respect to your patients. This evening, brother, you shall have a full assurance respecting the widow, without my concluding the least thing with her."

"But, my dear sister, in order to fill up the measure of your goodness towards me,—I should wish for one thing more."

"What is it?"

"That you would, before I speak with our good father, likewise try to sound *his* opinion

in respect to this marriage ; I do not mean that you should do so exactly in a straight forward way, but only distantly, very distantly ; you know what I mean. Ah, you cannot imagine how infinitely this would lighten the task of my first addressing him !”

“ Well, that can be done,” said the sister.

“ I understand he has already laid aside half his prejudice against the widow.”

“ That he has indeed, and more than half.— But, my dear husband, how is it with you ? I hope you will likewise do something in this business.”

“ All that lies in my power, I will do with the greatest pleasure.—I am heartily tired of the discord that has divided the family !”—

" To-morrow, you know, is Sunday, and my father will dine here.—What, if you were to take him into your study, and try to dispose him for a fatherly, kind reception of my brother? What if you were to represent my brother as so touched by his late present, so grateful, so properly disposed—"

" That even he could not but long to have him back again?"

" Precisely so."

" Well, I shall do it with great pleasure.—But then he will immediately send for your brother, if he thinks him in good health, or, if he imagines him still indisposed, he will hasten to embrace him."

" He is not one of those who embrace so readily."

"Oh no!" said young Mr. Stark. "Excuse me, sister!—You promised me"—

"Right; to sound him first relative to the marriage. And for this, time is wanted. One attack so quickly after another will never do.—And yet I should be very sorry, if the Sunday, when we have him alone and undisturbed, and when he is usually so cheerful, should be lost for the proposed important conversation.—Stop!—You have been in the country, brother, have you not?—At a friend's?"

"Certainly."

"Now mind me! You have not *been*, but are to *be* in the country. My husband recommended this trip to you, and to-day or yesterday—suppose to-day, in the afternoon—you are set out for the place in question. In the meantime, you will remain in this house

with your good sister, and may return to town whenever you please. Schlicht shall be in the secret."

"What a happy man am I!" exclaimed the doctor. "What a wife is this of mine!"

"Do you confess it?" said Mrs. Herbst, with a smile.

"A sensible, excellent wife! Of such powers of invention, of such versatility of mind!"

"Malice! malice!" cried Mrs. Herbst. "This is pure malice! He only wants to seduce me into that kind of confession, which a wife so much dislikes, by getting me to say; Husband, you are in the right!"

The sweet air with which she now rose,

seemed to promise a kiss, and the doctor had already wiped his lips in pleasing anticipation, when suddenly she turned towards the door, ordered the pudding to be brought in, and very gravely resumed her seat.

## CHAPTER X.



"Do I not come a little too often?" said Mrs. Herbst, as she set her foot on the threshold of the widow's apartment. "Will you not soon forbid my visits altogether?"

"O my dear friend! I forbid your visits! I, who, if I could have my wish, would never be separated from you.—What a question to put to me!"

"Well, it does sound worse than it was intended to do. Do I not know, that you bear with me most good-naturedly?"

"Bear with you! Well, now I will cer-

tainly not permit you to depart from hence before midnight."

"Mercy upon me! How dreadfully should I be punished!"

They now sat down, and Mrs. Herbst was just upon the point of introducing the main topic of conversation, when a lad of the counting-house announced the same old gentleman, who had yesterday assisted Mrs. Lyk out of the coach.

Mrs. Herbst immediately perceived there was something in the wind.—"Schlicht?" she exclaimed. "He cannot come here except with some message. What can it be?"

"He wishes," said the lad, who looked significantly at Mrs. Herbst, "he wishes to speak to Mrs. Lyk in private."



"In private? Oh my stars! Then I must be off! How unfortunate!—But if you will permit me, my dearest friend, I will in the meantime step into the other room, and indeed I will be a very good girl! I shall take my station at the window, and not at the door."

"How you tease me!" said Mrs. Lyk; "pray stop here. What secrets can he possibly have?"

"Who can tell? Perhaps after all he may not be sent. He is a bachelor you know."

"Oh, you are a sad little rogue."—The widow now went to the door, and with great politeness invited the old clerk to enter, who immediately proclaimed by the serenity of his countenance the good purport of his message, and confirmed Mrs. Herbst in her supposition.

"Well," said she, "is it really you, my dear, good old father?—But what do I see!—dressed out so gaily?—A bridegroom, or a suitor? In which character do you come?"

Old Mr. Schlicht laughed heartily.

"Indeed, I never saw you so gay in my whole life."

"It is no difficult matter to be a little gay, my dearest Mrs. Herbst, if one has but good friends, who make much of one."—He then cast a sidelong glance at his new satin waistcoat, and again from his waistcoat to his benefactress, with such an expression of gratitude and love, as might have made a face still more wrinkled, look young again.—The said waistcoat had been a present from Mrs. Herbst on his last birth-day, and he had now put it on for the first time to do honour to his mission.

Mrs. Herbst touched by his gesture, tapped him softly upon his shoulder.—“But tell me, my good old Schlicht, is it then true, that you wish to be quite alone with Mrs. Lyk? Must I be off?”

“Why so? why so?”

“The lad who announced you here, said—”

“Oh the lad is”—He was within a hair’s breadth of uttering a forbidden expression, but fortunately he recollected himself, and for the term “fool” which he had in his mind, he substituted the phrase, “none of the brightest!” and he assured Mrs. Herbst, that she not only might hear the whole of his message, but that she was even mentioned in it.

He now began his address with great formality.—“His employer,” he said, “regretted with

all his heart, that on account of an increasing debility in his hearing, he had not yesterday understood the real intention of the agreeable visit, with which Mrs. Lyk had honoured him, but had considered it as a mere act of politeness, unmerited on his part. He had afterwards been instructed by his daughter, by Mrs. Herbst, the lady here present—who at these words received a very cordial look—more particularly as to the purport of that visit; and, as Mr. Stark had known him, Mr. Schlieht, by many years' experience, to be a faithful and discreet servant, and likewise well versed in commercial affairs, he had therefore been honoured with the commission, to convey to Mrs. Lyk, the assurance of Mr. Stark's perfect readiness to render her any service in his power; he had likewise been ordered to repair to the counting-house of Mr. Horn, and immediately to discharge either by bill, or ready money, the amount of the debt, as Mr. Horn himself should choose; for this same trouble-

some gentleman had been long known to Mr. Stark, though he had never heard any good of him. Moreover, Mr. Stark requested Mrs. Lyk, that if a similar occurrence should take place with regard to any other creditor, she would immediately address herself to him, and would, in all respects, consider him as her trustee, under which character he offers himself to her with real satisfaction. At the same time he wishes to dispense with all thanks on her part, as he had ascertained from his son, that he ran no kind of risk in assisting Mrs. Lyk, and therefore could not, in fact, pretend to any merit through this trifling compliance with her request. — He, Mr. Schlicht, now begged to have an exact statement of the whole amount of Mr. Horn's demand, in order that he might carry into effect the remainder of his commission, and report to his worthy employer that the whole affair was settled."

Scarcely had Mr. Schlicht finished his ad-

dress with great self-satisfaction, when Mrs. Herbst seized the hand of the widow, and asked, not without the honest pride natural to the daughter of such a man; "Was I not in the right?"

"Oh, my friend!—Such generosity to a stranger, to a woman almost entirely unknown to him!—But I know to whom I am indebted for this kindness."

"To whom? to whom?"—whilst she bent backward to avoid the embrace of her friend—  
"To my father, to nobody else!"

"He has the noblest of daughters?"

"Do you know her?—She is a gossip, who can keep nothing to herself, who must out with every thing she knows to her aged parent; and who of course told him all she knew relative to the unpleasant situation

of her friend, and of the real object of her visit of yesterday, which had failed of its purpose.—This is all, I assure you. Not a syllable about intercession, or inducement to assist you. Not a word of that. This would have been to degrade my friend, and offend my father. He does not act at the suggestion of others, he acts according to the dictates of his own heart.”

“ I listen to you with an admiration—with a feeling—”

“ Come, let us have done with this !”—And now she, in her turn embraced the widow with true and heart-felt friendship.—“ My good Schlicht, whose time, as I know, is always precious, waits for an answer ; and I hope you will not mortify him by a refusal.”

The widow now begged Mr. Schlicht to assure his worthy employer of her profound

respect, and deep and grateful sense of this unmerited proof of his kindness; but, at the same time to tell him, that a compliance with one part of his commands, rendered obedience to the other impossible.—“ I shall even trouble you, my dear Mr. Schlicht, with a few lines in my own hand-writing, which you will have the goodness to present to him. My personal thanks I shall reserve till another occasion.—

Will you excuse me for a moment my dear friend?” added she, addressing Mrs. Herbst and turning towards the other room.

“ Well go my friend! I know you are about to do something altogether superfluous; but I also know, that you will have your own way!”

Mrs. Herbst took advantage of the few moments she was alone with Mr. Schlicht, to instruct him in every thing necessary for him to know. She told him of the bill which her hus-



band had given to Mr. Horn, in order to ward off all danger from the widow ; she begged that her father might not know any thing about this, and that therefore the receipt of Mr. Horn, must be written for the widow, and not for Doctor Herbst ; she informed him of her intention to make it appear that her brother was gone for some days to the country, till a certain scheme should be ripened, which would not fail to make him abandon his whim of going to Bremen ; and lastly, she explained to him, that there was no longer any necessity for concealing from her father his good state of health and his departure for the country ; but that this departure had only taken place this afternoon.—Mr. Schlicht, with his usual complaisance, promised to observe every thing most punctually, and found the arrangements of his dear Mrs. Herbst quite charming.

Mrs. Lyk now re-entered the room, holding in her hand a note and a little slip of paper,

which contained the amount of her debt to Mr. Horn; and immediately after her the maid-servant brought in some sweet wine and refreshments. Mrs. Herbst declined taking any thing, pleading as an excuse her aversion to all strong beverage, and Mr. Schlicht also declined, saying, that his affairs at home were most pressing, and that he had still so many things to do, that while waiting there he seemed to stand upon thorns. The widow, who was anxious to testify her gratitude to him for the trouble he had taken, exhausted her eloquence in trying to persuade him to take something, and his own beginning already to falter, Mrs. Herbst, who wished to be alone with the widow, stepped in to his relief, and kindly brought him through.—“ Nobody,” said she, “ knows my dear good Schlicht better than I do; he performs every thing entrusted to his care with the utmost zeal and fidelity; and as the house of my father is wholly under his care, he is not less attached to it, than is

the snail to the habitation with which it has grown up."

This was a kind of praise quite after Mr. Schlicht's own heart; it swelled his bosom with joy. He thanked her cordially for it, and accepted it with all the frankness in the world. Mrs. Lyk likewise said many kind things to him on his taking leave; she recollected all the encomiums she had heard bestowed upon him by young Mr. Stark, and expressed herself much gratified at having made the acquaintance of a man, who was so much valued and esteemed by a family of such worth and virtue, and of so high a reputation as that of Mr. Stark.—No wine of Syracuse, of Cyprus, or be it what it might, that the widow had offered him, could have gladdened the heart of the old man so much as these soothing words, or could have turned his head so effectually. When he reached the street, he had really the manner and appearance

of one intoxicated. He spoke continually to himself, and made so many and such grotesque gesticulations, that several of the persons that were passing by stood still, and laughed as they gazed after him. The substance of his soliloquy was this :—That among all the ladies of this place Mrs. Herbst was undoubtedly the best, and immediately after her, Mrs. Lyk was the most excellent and amiable.—Upon the mere supposition that any one could be so impudent as to deny this fact, he struck his stick violently against the pavement, accompanied with such strange grimaces, that two children, who were playing in the street, screamed aloud with alarm, and ran to hide themselves in a house hard by.

## CHAPTER XI.



IT became somewhat distressing to Mrs. Herbst, that the widow could find no end in praising the generosity of her father, and the disinterestedness of her own friendship; and much as she entreated and strove to divert the conversation into another channel, the widow always returned to the point from which she set out.

“I could very much have wished;” said Mrs. Herbst, at last, “to speak to you about my brother; but I see that—”

In an instant the mouth of the widow was closed, but her ears were opened the wider.

“ You will scarcely believe, that under the apparent cheerfulness in which I arrived here, a very bitter vexation lies concealed ? But so it is. I have to complain against my brother ; very much so indeed.”

“ Impossible ! Against such a brother ?”

“ Exactly so ; against such a brother !— It is precisely because he is such a brother.—”

“ My dear Mrs. Herbst !—” said the widow, whose feelings were evidently very deeply hurt.

“ I cannot help it ; my heart is on my tongue. —Hear me, my dear friend. Nothing in the world hurts me so much, as when I do not find a return of kindness and a corresponding communion of heart ; when reserve and cold distrust are the reward for my candour and

confidence.—You may say what you please, such conduct is vexatious, is shocking.”

“ Did I then defend it? But I must say, that your worthy brother—”

“ Yes, there it is; you will not allow any thing to be said against him; you are too much his friend !”

“ And should I not be so?”—Here the full tear stood glistening in her eye.

“ But at the same time, you are also *my* friend, and you will be just.—I am willing to suppose the worst—which however is happily not the case—that my brother has something preying upon his heart, which does him no honour; does he not know his sister, his loving sister, who would do any thing in the world rather than betray him? Does he not know his honest brother-in-law, who has at all

times taken such a lively interest in his happiness, and who also now would gladly assist him both by word and deed? Is it right, that after a thousand entreaties, he should still remain silent?"

"But may I at least know—"

"Oh, there is very little to be known! Alas! what I know, or rather guess at, is quite a common case:—he is in love!"

"In love—did you say?" asked the widow, not without hesitation; and at the same moment she pictured to herself the fervour with which her noble-minded friend had kissed her hand at bidding her farewell, and recollected, how at that moment her heart had whispered to her: I am sure he is in love!

Mrs. Herbst continued: "At least there is every symptom of it. An incessant sighing;



looks continually fixed upon the same spot; a soft and subdued voice; a moist and languishing eye.—But with whom is he in love?—No entreaty, no exhortation, can wring this secret from him.—I hope for goodness' sake it is not with some person, who has no longer the disposal of her affections.”

“O certainly not, certainly not!” said the widow—while at the same instant she felt conscious of the overhasty word; which had thus inadvertently escaped her, and became in the highest degree embarrassed and confused.

“Oh, then you know her?”—And here she drew closer to the widow.

“Nothing, my dear friend, I know nothing: but—I conclude from his way of thinking—from his character, that—if he were aware of such a circumstance—”

“ Well, that may be; but I must give up guessing. For that he should bestow his affections on a person whom he was afraid to name—who was unworthy of him—no, that I cannot, that I will not suppose.”

“ Oh, let me entreat you; do not think so!”  
—She could scarcely refrain from tears; for possible as it was that she was not the person in question, still she could not help placing herself in the situation of that person.

“ I will speak to you quite unreservedly, and open my heart freely to you, my dearest Lyk. It is not without reason that I address myself to you. I scarcely ever saw my brother during the time he was arranging your ledgers; he was every evening with you.—Of course you must have been on the most intimate terms with him.”

The widow trembled for what was to follow. She blushed and turned pale by turns.

Mrs. Herbst continued: "May there not, during your many unconstrained and *tête à tête* conversations,—for I believe you were mostly alone with him—"

"O yes—but—"

"May there not have been some little occasion in which he betrayed his sentiments? Some accidental word that dropped from him, which might tend to throw some light upon the subject?"

"Not that I know of. Let me try and recollect—in general—"

"What in general, my dear friend?"

"He had plenty of employment on his hands; he had to arrange accounts, and make calculations. There was very little said."

"It is true that calculations occupy the

head. But for all this—the commencement of his passion corresponds exactly with the time that he was making the said calculations under your roof; for till then he was as gay and cheerful as ever. I feel confident that his thoughts were running upon something else, besides numbers and fractions.—Recollect yourself; had you never any parties here? Where there no ladies on those occasions?"

"I never had any parties."—She no longer knew what to do with herself, and kept continually fidgetting about her dress.

"Well then! I see I am not likely to learn any thing here: I shall return just as wise as I came.—My comfort must be, that time finally brings every thing to light, and that this love affair will not remain an eternal mystery.—But do not suppose that mere curiosity brought me hither; no, the real cause was a tender solicitude for a brother, whom I am foolish enough

still to continue to love, although he deserves it so little."

"Nay, nay! you are too severe."

"I see him becoming paler and thinner every day, losing all his spirits, all his wonted cheerfulness, and wasting away in the very vigour of his youth."

"Wasting away?—My dear Mrs. Herbst!"

"It is even so. It was but this very morning, that my husband said to me: This will never do; the consequences will be serious if things go on longer in this way; your brother must absolutely explain himself."

The widow's heart now became depressed to such a degree, that she could scarcely support it. It was certainly a declaration on which every thing depended; but that he

should pine away in a mysterious grief, rather than confess his passion; what was she to conclude from this?—Did he himself disapprove of the attachment he had formed?—Did he object to her small fortune, or were her children considered as an impediment?—

Mrs. Herbert resumed her observations. "I will not deny, that on my side too, I feel a little self-interest in this business.—I once had a sister, whom I had the misfortune to lose in early life. Alas, my friend, and what a sister! Of such mildness of temper, such goodness, such amiability!—How much have I wished to be again blessed with such a sister! It has always been among my fondest hopes, that my brother would restore her to me in the person he might choose for his wife. How tenderly should I have loved her, and my brother doubly so for her sake."

"I too," said the widow, "have lost a

sister"—and here she drew forth her handkerchief, and wiped away the tears, that streamed in abundance from her eyes.

Mrs. Lyk had certainly nothing of the hypocrite about her—save that small portion of the art of dissembling, which is, if one may so say it, absolutely necessary for every woman; and therefore her tears on this occasion flowed without restraint from the genuine fulness of her heart; but could the little Emily have been present at this scene, she would doubtless have had some cause to wonder, that she, who died at the age of eight, and had rarely been mentioned for the last fourteen years, should at this moment again receive so profuse a tribute of tears.

Mrs. Herbst also drew forth her handkerchief, but it was for a different purpose, it was to conceal a smile behind it, which she could not repress.—“Let us break off this

discourse, my good Lyk; for what purpose should we render ourselves miserable? We must make up our minds to the reflection, that what is gone, is gone; and that the grave will not surrender up its spoils."

"No, it will not, indeed!" sobbed forth the widow.

"But on the other hand, where there is life, there is hope.—My brother is possibly not so far wasted away, as my anxiety made me apprehend; at least, to day at dinner, he had a most charming appetite, and that, I think, is not exactly a symptom of approaching death." She smiled.—"As for the rest, I do not think it at all likely, that he will go to Bremen now; there appears every probability of his staying here—and thus—"

"Of his staying here?" said the widow,



and seemed evidently to be comforted by the intelligence.

“ I think so at least.—And thus, my husband, who is very well skilled in complaints of this kind, will have him under his own eye, and soon, I trust, restore him to his strength again. He will doubtless become reasonable at last, and explain himself. Do you not think so ?”—She smiled again.

The widow became not a little puzzled as well as astonished, at the sudden change of tone and manner on the part of Mrs. Herbst. She was almost led to imagine, that this whole discussion had taken place not for the brother's sake, but for her own, and that he must already have declared to his sister his love for her. This supposition was confirmed, when Mrs. Herbst continued in a tone of great hilarity: “ I shall then get a sister after

all; oh, I am quite sure I shall! Just such a mild, sweet, lovely sister as the one I lost. I almost fancy I see her already before me, the angelic creature!"—She had taken the hand of the widow, and at the last words, gave it a soft pressure, which the widow, unconscious of what she did, and startling at observing it too late, not only returned, but accompanied with a sweet smile, which beamed forth in the midst of tears. She felt at once angry and pleased at the cunning of her friend; was provoked to see her jocular air, and yet felt delighted with it: in fact she knew not how to define the nature of her feelings at this moment. Above all things, however, she wished to be alone, in order to reflect at leisure on all that had passed, and to satisfy herself how far she might have betrayed her own heart.

Mrs. Herbst, as if she had read this wish in her eyes, rose to take her leave.—“It is

growing late," said she, "I must be gone. Farewell my good, sweet, dear—heavens! I was within a hair's breadth of saying, Sister! you see how full my heart is of the love-affair of my brother.—What think you? Shall I be again fully and entirely reconciled to him?"

"My dear friend, you never have been offended with him for a single moment."

"Have I not? Indeed not?"—And now followed a warmer and longer embrace than had ever yet taken place between them.

Mrs. Herbst met the widow's eldest boy in the passage; she took him up in her arms and kissed him. The younger one was somewhat indisposed, and kept his bed. The idea instantly occurred to her to request his mother, that she would permit her to send to-morrow morning for the boy, in order to

show him to her good, old father, who doated so much upon children, and who would not fail to be highly pleased with the fine figure and engaging manners of the child.—“He can play with my own little ones, and dine with us.”—Mrs. Lyk consented, and the little boy sang and leaped for joy.—

When Mrs. Herbst reached home, she rendered her husband, and, above all, her brother extremely happy by the reports which she made. What chiefly touched the latter, was the assistance which his father had rendered the widow; it filled him with a joy and a gratitude greater than he could have felt for the most important service bestowed upon himself. But he was very much disappointed at the reserve which his sister manifested with respect to the conversation which she had had with the widow, and that with all his solicitations, he could draw no more from her than merely this; that he

might rest assured of the widow's love, most perfectly assured; and that she, his sister, pledged him her most sacred word, that he would receive a joyful consent the moment he should ask it. What the particular expressions were, which the widow had employed, and by what symptoms she had betrayed her heart, were secrets, which still remained concealed, even from a brother and a lover, under the veil of female delicacy; to the husband alone was it permitted in an hour of confidence, in some slight degree to remove this veil.

## CHAPTER XII.



CHURCH was over, and the streets began to be filled with well-dressed people, whose appearance did not at all betray, how much they had been scolded for their sins, when one of the little Herbsts, from his post at the window, where he had been upon the look-out, ran with all speed toward the door, and was quickly pursued by the whole noisy swarm, who rushed after him to the passage, to welcome with shouts their grand-father, who arrived attended by their mother;—but the latter was only an every-day sight, and therefore had no particular attraction for the Sunday.

The old gentleman received the little ones

with his usual reproof for their unseemly noise, but at the same time with a kindness of look and manner, which immediately effaced the impression of his rebuke. He was just about to empty his pockets for their lickerish tongues, and his purse for their saving-box, when all at once he beheld a fine boy who stood quite lonely, and, as it seemed, melancholy in the back ground; he instantly enquired of his daughter who it was?

“Oh, this is a dear, sweet boy,” said Mrs. Herbst; “he is the eldest little Lyk; the school-fellow and play-mate of my William.”

“Lyk?” said Mr. Stark; “let him come nearer, daughter.”

He came at the call of Mrs. Herbst, and at her bidding went up to the old gentleman, whose hand he kissed with all the respect and

politeness to which his mother had accustomed him.

“He is indeed a very charming boy!” said Mr. Stark, and gave him his share of the good things he had brought, as well as to the rest; he then lifted him up on a table, in order, as he expressed it, to see if he should know him.—“Yes, my sweet little fellow,” said he, “we are already old acquaintances.—Look, daughter, look! What a family face is here!—Observe this forehead and this chin—”

“Exactly old Mr. Lyk; it cannot be mistaken!”

“Playfulness of nature!” exclaimed Mr. Stark.

“Order of nature!” exclaimed his daughter, placing at the same moment one of her own children upon the same table, whose features



really bore a striking resemblance to those of his grand-father.—The old man now caressed them both, and became exceedingly cheerful.

“ But,” said he, “ when the countenance of the good old Lyk brightened with a smile, there was something so very peculiar in his upper-lip; I wonder if the little one has the same.—My dear boy, do me the pleasure to smile. Do you understand me?”

The boy remained serious; for he had no occasion to smile; he had not yet learned the courtly art of finding a ready smile on every invitation.—

“ I am sore, I can induce you to do it,” said the old gentleman, taking out from his purse a new bright double-ducat which he promised him, if he would do him the pleasure to smile.—The boy did not disavow the mercantile blood which ran in his veins; he smiled

at the sight of the bright and beautiful ducat, with a visible desire to entice it from the old gentleman's pocket into his own; and now Mr. Stark pressed him with great fervour to his bosom, and kissed him.—“He has it, he has it, the very smile! Look you here, daughter!”

“He is as like his grand-father, as two drops of water are to each other.”

“Is it not so? There, take it my darling; and when you reach home, give this ducat to your mamma, and beg her to put it into your saving-box.”

During the dinner, the old gentleman was in his very best humour; he talked and played so much with the children, and seemed to listen with such a kindly air to the report which was made to him of his son's improved state of health, and of his little excursion to the country, that the afternoon's conversation between him and

the doctor could not possibly have commenced under more favourable auspices.

The doctor began by wishing the old gentleman joy in a jocose way, on his excellent method of treating his critical patient, into whose complaint he had penetrated with the most perfect accuracy, and, as it appeared, had cured quite radically.

"Indeed?" said Mr. Stark smiling. "Do I then possess some disposition for the art?"

"Disposition, did you say? Why, you are quite a master of it."

"Is every thing happily over?"

"Every thing: the crisis is past."

"Has the obstinacy entirely left the heart?"

“ Perfectly so ; and the heart is in the healthiest and soundest state possible ; full of love, gratitude, and veneration for a father, who instead of being angry, as he might have been, only loaded him with generosity and kindness.”

“ But I have not yet quite perfected my cure, dear doctor. Your accounts of different diseases have made me so dreadfully fearful of a relapse, that, for safety’s sake, I will prescribe my patient a small after-treatment, which I think will be to his benefit.”

“ I think, for the present, the best thing would be to administer strengthening medicines.”

“ Do you think so ? And how is this to be done ?”

“ By complete oblivion, and a perfect return of tender and fatherly love.”

"I fear it is still a little too early for that.— No, no! as I began the thing according to my own ideas, I will carry it through in the same manner. I will not give up the advantage I possess; for as the young gentleman's spirit of defiance ultimately proved the means of his surrendering himself into my hands, he *must* now do as I wish him to do."

"Was he then not at all times in your hands?"

"Not entirely so. I was obliged to compromise matters. Suppose in the former relation in which I stood to him, I had said;—My son! Such or such is my will; upon a compliance with this I absolutely insist; in such or such a manner you *shall* act, or I will turn you out of my house, and send you to some place you dislike and abhor,—for between ourselves, that he utterly detests this Bremen of his, I know perfectly well—Now tell me, if you please,

what would his mother, his sister, yourself, all the world have thought of me? I should have been called a tyrant, a barbarian, a hard hearted, unnatural father.—To have acted thus *before* he showed this spirit of defiance, would not indeed have been possible without harshness; but this once shown, I may and dare act in this manner; and I should like to see the man, who would blame me for so doing.”

“ One, however, my dear sir, will do so.”

“ Who?”

“ A man of the most noble heart:—Yourself!”

“ You are mistaken there!—I shall frankly say to my son: from henceforth there is an end to our partnership; no longer reckon upon that; in *my* house, in *my* firm, you never shall enter again.”—

“My dear father!” exclaimed the doctor.

“That stands good! That is decided once for ever.”

The doctor was not a little alarmed, and after some moments' reflection, he said in a tone which betrayed considerable emotion ; “At least I hope you will hear me, and then, I feel assured, you will think otherwise.”

“Hear you? That I certainly will with great pleasure. Proceed ; I am all attention. —But as for thinking otherwise, before that can be the case, you must really have something very extraordinary to tell me.”

“Nothing very extraordinary, but very true.”

“Very well, I am curious to hear it.”

“ You will not think it extraordinary, if I maintain, that a single action, to which happy or unhappy circumstances may have led a man, may produce an entire change within him, and as it were infuse into him a new soul. The consciousness of one dishonourable action may pervert a man for ever ; while, on the contrary, the consciousness of one exalted and virtuous deed, may for ever ennoble his character.”

“ At what does all this aim ?”

“ You recollect what I told you respecting the conduct of your son, at the death-bed and after the demise of the late Mr. Lyk.”

“ Yes ! that was generous, that was noble !”

“ Should you ever have expected that from him ?”

“ Never !”



“ Nor, to say the truth, would he have expected it from himself. An unlooked-for, and to him quite new impression, an irresistible feeling transported him beyond himself. But this generous action once performed, do you think it possible that the impression could have vanished like lightning, without leaving a trace behind? Must it not have left a recollection, and must not this recollection have had a powerful influence upon his mind?—Believe me, my dear sir, the consciousness of virtue, worth, and goodness, which your son carried with him from the house of Lyk, has become infinitely beneficial to him: it has already cured him in a great degree of his former pusillanimity, vanity, and egotism; and it still continues to have the effect of improving and ennobling his character. —What you formerly, and with so much justice, censured in his conduct, is now entirely changed; he has abandoned his former acquaintances; dancing and the gaming-table have no longer any attractions for him, and as to dress, he has

become quite indifferent to it ; for many months he has not had a single new suit ; for many months he has not even entered a concert room, the most innocent of all places of amusement. His present predominant, and indeed only impulse, is to be active, to be useful, to merit the esteem and approbation of others as well as of himself.—Is not all this the visible effect of that moment, when he beheld himself in a light so new to him, and saw virtue in all her beauty and dignity ?”

The old gentleman, who listened with great attention, expressed his approbation by a friendly nod of the head ; though this explanation, if not exactly false, was at least partial, by viewing only one side of the question, and that very imperfectly. The chief promoter of the change that had thus taken place in his son's heart,—*love*, had for good reasons been left out of the question.

“That he should even have been guilty of the folly,” continued the doctor, “of bidding you defiance, does not overthrow my opinion; nay, it rather confirms it. Precisely on that very account, that he had become a more estimable character, he could no longer brook the treatment which he had formerly merited; precisely because he began to feel a certain degree of self-esteem, he was anxious to enjoy the esteem of others, and, therefore, assuredly, that of his father; and hence the melancholy distance at which he kept from you, and the unfortunate distrust, which induced him intentionally to let you remain, as it were, in the dark respecting him, gave rise to that spirit of defiance, that very unjustifiable, and over-hasty resolution, of which you, by your wise conduct, have caused him so heartily to repent.—But, my dearest father, would you now so cruelly punish a fault committed from such motives, and in a son who daily becomes more worthy of you?”

“How?” exclaimed Mr. Stark, while he rose with great vivacity; “What are you talking of, my dear doctor? What are you thinking about?”

“You said, he should never again be admitted either into your house, or your firm.”

“True, that he never shall; that he never must.”

“Do you then still cherish such animosity?”

“Animosity? I cherish animosity? Well, zounds! if all fathers were to take this method of showing their animosity, it strikes me, that the young gentlemen, their sons, ought to be mightily glad of it!”

“Pray, how am I to understand all this?”

“Why, I will dissolve all partnership with

him and retire: *My* house shall become *his* house, and *my* firm *his* firm.—Do you understand me now?"

"Good God!" exclaimed the doctor joyfully, "now indeed you explain yourself! The text was dark and mysterious; the interpretation is as clear as daylight!—But your poor son! What a fright will he be in!"

"Do not begin jesting too early. The conditions still remain behind."

"Oh, these will be made by a father, by a noble minded and generous father. I feel perfectly tranquil on that head."

"That they are calculated for his good, you will readily imagine.—I have him now, as I before told you, in my power; and what I insist upon is that he shall become more active; that he shall manage the firm, when

it becomes his own, with more earnestness and more zeal, than he did under me; he shall not appoint a successor to one of the clerks, who is now on the point of leaving, because he can very well fulfil his duties and his own too, without exactly becoming a slave to his desk; he shall renounce all gay societies and public places of amusement; and make his home more attractive to him, by taking a wife:—but none of your ladies of fashion, no fine dame addicted to dress, nor yet a blue-stockings—but a good, domestic, affectionate wife, whom *he* may love, and *I* also be able to esteem, and call my daughter without a blush.—If he assents to these conditions:—well, I will then give up every thing to him; I will remove into another house, and manage my little remaining concerns in peace and quietness.—If he will not consent; well, then I cannot help it. I shall continue to work on with my clerks, and as for him—I will send the young gentleman, where he does

not at all like to go, and yet to the very place where he threatened to go—to this Bremen of his! In *my* house, as long as I call it my own, he shall never enter again.”

“Such then is your after-treatment, my dear father, is it?”

“Yes!—But do you think he will relish it?”

“He will be sure equally to recognise in it your love and your wisdom.—Prepare yourself to embrace the most subdued, the most grateful of sons!”

“You do think so?—Well then, do you yourself prepare to behold a man who loses his house and his firm, and yet smiles at the loss.”

“How much do I admire, how happy do

I feel in witnessing your good humour, my best of fathers."

"But I am not at all happy in the opinion you have formed of me.—What? I full of animosity? Animosity against my only son, of whom you told me things, which drew tears of joy from my eyes? Animosity against him, respecting whom, I had long ago pledged you my word, that if he should turn out what I wished him to be, it would be my first and principal care, how to render him happy?—And such a pledge you think that old Stark could have given in vain? That such a word he could break without remorse?—Go to—go to!"—and at the same time he prepared to depart—"You mistook my heart, you have hurt my honour, and now I shall not enter your doors again"—he seemed to reflect for a moment—"at least for these eight days!"

The doctor smiled, grasped the hand of



his father-in-law, and shook it cordially. The warmth with which he felt the old gentleman shake his hand in return, convinced him of the entire satisfaction of the kind-hearted father at his receiving this testimony of the altered disposition of his son.—He was still more strongly convinced of it, by a very acceptable present which the same evening was sent him—a hamper full of the choicest Rhenish wine, with which, as an accompanying message expressed it, Doctor Herbst was to enliven his heart.

## CHAPTER XIII.



THE more important the point of marriage had become, by the declaration of the father, the more anxious became the son to know his opinion of the widow, and the more cautious the daughter in sounding him on that subject. The following afternoon, when she came to take tea with her mother, she found her father there, and ventured upon an attempt, which did not however exactly succeed.

“Have you heard, my dear father,” said she, “what an important and memorable event has taken place?”

“No!” said the old gentleman.

“The noble and amorous knight Wraker, has led his heavenly Dulcinea to the altar of Hymen.”

“Has he indeed?—Poor, miserable creature!”

“Do not rail at him! They say he feels so happy, so exceedingly happy!”

“Very likely.—He is now pretty near the kingdom of heaven.”

“Do you mean the one that is to come? I doubt whether he thinks much about that.—But what is old Wraker and his love-affair to me?—I only follow the example which my good father has set me, and look upon the innocent little orphans, who have thus once more found a protector.—Ah, that dear, sweet, little orphan, who was with us yesterday!

What say you?—Oh, that he also had a protector!”

The mother gave her daughter a significant and dissuasive look, and the father grew suddenly very grave. — “As for this,” said he, “you had best leave it to the care of heaven. To meddle with such affairs—but what am I about? I am very foolish, indeed, very foolish!”

Mrs. Herbst, who did not know what to say, stammered forth; “My dear father!”

“Very foolish indeed! I was on the point of laying down a rule of prudence for a woman like you, as if *you* needed it.”

“From whom would I receive it more gladly, than from you?”

“No, no! This would be holding a candle

to the sun.—Besides you are yet much too young for such a folly.—Match-making is a business fitted only for old, decrepit matrons.”

The sly and subtile air, with which these words were uttered, and the evident vexation of the mother, filled the daughter with such alarm, that she became instantly speechless. Something disagreeable must have occurred between her parents, which she had unconsciously touched upon; and this grieved her extremely.

“ For heaven’s sake! dear mother, what have I done?” exclaimed she, the moment her father had left the room.

“ Yes, that capricious, whimsical old man, your father! Can any body ever understand him?—I think if I were to live with him a hundred years, I should never know how thoroughly to understand him.—Only imagine

what a scene I had yesterday with him about the widow!"

"About the widow?—You could not have told me of any thing more unpleasant."

"He found her here waiting for him, when he returned from your house."

"Impossible!"

"She wished to return him her thanks for his having helped her out of her difficulties respecting Mr. Horn: but he begged to be excused, and would scarcely listen to it.—He immediately turned the conversation upon her eldest boy, whom he had found at your house, and said so many pretty and agreeable things about him, that he conquered the very heart of the good woman, and made her quite cheerful and confidential. He then led her

on from one topic to another, and was so satisfied with her, so very satisfied—”

“ Good heavens, dear mother, to what a pitch you have excited my curiosity! Do sum up in a few words the substance of what happened.”

“ With all my heart, if I can but put it rightly together.—I rather think the first thing they spoke of was the kind of domestic life which she formerly led with her father, and of household economy; yes, it was even so.”

“ There she would feel quite at home; she would know every thing about it.

“ Every thing; even to the very minutest details.”

“ That I can easily conceive. My father must have been pleased with that.”

“ Very much so indeed !—He then began to speak of the sudden change she must have experienced, when by her marriage she was taken away from her former quiet domestic occupations, and transplanted into the vortex of pleasure: he supposed, that this change must have appeared quite enchanting to her, and that she would on no account have returned to the country.”

“ Only look at the old gentleman’s art; here was a snare laid to entrap her !”

“ I do not know whether she was aware of any thing of the kind, but so it was that she became quite depressed, and assured him, that in the midst of all these gaieties, she could never think of her paternal roof without a painful longing to be there once again. Man, she said, was created for active employment, and that that alone could ensure his happiness; pleasure, as she knew by her



own experience, was nothing more than the seasoning in the banquet of existence, and must be enjoyed as such: whoever perverted it, by taking it in the way of nourishment, destroyed his health, and robbed even pleasure of all its charms. Now, as she depended on herself alone, she was once more free to lead an active life, and that, as soon as she was delivered from more pressing cares, she hoped once again to lead a happy one."

"Delightful! Excellent! That was spoken quite after his own heart!"

"Upon this, the conversation turned upon commercial affairs, into which, by assiduous industry, she had already obtained such an insight, and was so perfectly acquainted with its different branches, that he bestowed a great deal of praise upon her. But she declined it all, referring it to your brother, her master as she called him, and of whom she now began to speak in

terms of such heart-felt gratitude and such sincere emotion, that both myself and your father, were not a little touched. At length her feelings quite overpowered her, and she remained silent."

"But, my dear mother, in all this I see not the least inducement for a dispute."

"Nor was there any."

"No!—But you seemed to say as much.—

"Only hear me to the end!—When the widow was gone, your father walked for some time up and down the room, spoke of her in very honourable terms, and afterwards of your husband, who, he said, possessed a great knowledge of mankind, and had first shown him this excellent woman in her true light.—A great pity it is, added he, that she was condemned to meet with a man like that Lyk, who was so little war-

thy of her, and who might have reduced her and her children to the most abject misery.—Here, then I profited of the occasion and began ; What do you think, father, this would be just the kind of wife for our son. And as she is a widow, I do not see, why we should not make him a proposal on that head ; for she is still but a young woman, and I am sure they would make a very happy couple.”

“ O my dear mother ! This, I fear, was too hasty, too plainly spoken.”

“ Exactly so. But, my dear child, I saw the iron so temptingly hot, that I should have thought it a sin not to strike home at so lucky a moment.”

“ That is all very well, provided the sparks did not fly about too much ! It is rather a critical thing !—But what was his objection to the match ? What remark did he make ?”

"Just so much and no more!" said Mrs. Stark, drawing her hand flatly over the table.

"How? He did not answer at all?"

"Not a word. But then he *looked* at me; and you know what a look he can give when he pleases. How did his eyes glare upon me! —I was all of a tremble, expecting what was to break forth; but nothing! not a syllable! All he did, was to put on one of his sourest faces, and leave the room, shaking his head."

"That indeed is very mysterious. What would I give, if he had but spoken?"

"In the evening, during supper, he at length said something. But there he was again in his usual humour, and talked about the folly of match-making, by which one stood so little chance of gaining any thanks, but exposed

oneself to meet with so much ingratitude. He then talked about old women, who as their own flames were extinguished, were so fond of kindling those of others, in order to warm themselves by them, and thus awaken in some manner the recollection of happy days now no more; in short, he ran on with such provoking stuff, that I did, as he himself had done, put on one of *my* very sourest faces, and likewise left the room, shaking *my* head."

"This was much better than speaking, at all events, dear mother.—But if I could but guess—"

And here the two ladies began to exhaust themselves in the most subtle and sagacious conjectures as to the real cause why the old gentleman felt so strong a dislike to the proposed match with the widow; for that he did dislike it, they took at once for granted.—Was

it on account of her two children?—this Mrs. Herbst would not believe. Was it from some remains of his old prejudice against her?—this Mrs. Stark did not believe. Was it the depressed state of her fortune?—this neither of them could suppose. In short, the old gentleman remained on the present occasion, as he had often done before, a perfect riddle to them.

When the doctor arrived, their list of conjectures was increased by one more. He thought the father did not dislike the marriage on account of the widow and her circumstances, but on account of the manner in which it had been proposed. “I think,” said the doctor, “that it is his wish his son should act quite spontaneously, and without the influence or impulse of any one; that he should make a choice absolutely after his own heart.”—Had the doctor added, that perhaps by this shake of the head

the old gentleman had not so much referred to the widow as to his son, and that the discontent he had expressed, was not so much founded upon his disapprobation of *her*, as upon distrust of *him*; the doctor would very probably have then hit upon the whole truth, instead of finding out but half of it. The old gentleman thought it possible that his son might be persuaded into this match, but he also thought it very likely, from his character and disposition, that he might at a later period repent of this step, and that thus the marriage might take an unhappy turn.

On their way home, the doctor and his wife agreed that her brother should be made acquainted only with his father's favourable opinion of the widow, and that nothing should be said of the little scene that had passed with his mother. They both judged very rightly that his courage wanted rather to be strength-

ened than depressed. As for the rest, as every thing possible had now been done, in order to prepare a happy issue, they thought it best that young Mr. Stark should end the affair at once, and, as soon as possible, have an interview with his father.



## CHAPTER XIV.



THE very next day, young Mr. Stark pretended to be returned from the country; and, towards evening, he sent Mr. Schlicht to ask his father if he could have the happiness of seeing him in private. His request was instantly granted, and he found the doctor's words entirely true, that if he now approached his father, he would receive a different look, and when he spoke to him hear quite another tone. The reception, notwithstanding the gravity natural on such an occasion, was so extremely kind, and the old gentleman's enquiry, what effect the country air, at this advanced and already unpleasant season, had had upon him, was uttered in a tone of so much

interest, that the agitation of the son became in a great degree relieved.

In order to ease his heart still more, he immediately advanced towards his father, and began an entreaty for pardon for all that was past; but which his father was generous enough not to allow him to finish.—

“Have you,” said he, interrupting him, “spoken with your brother-in-law? Has he communicated to you my intentions?”

“Yes, dear father, he has.”

“And what is your opinion with regard to them?”

“I have no words to express my gratitude!” —Saying this, he grasped the hand of his parent, and kissed it with no less respect than emotion.

“ Did you likewise hear the conditions which I made !”

“ I shall most sacredly fulfil them, not merely as your commands, but also as the wishes of my own heart. To become active is henceforth my only wish. And as I hope to be assisted in every important undertaking by your experience and fatherly advice, I look forward with confidence to see my endeavours crowned with success. To contribute to your happiness will ever be my fondest care, the highest gratification of which my heart will be capable.”

“ Happy I shall not fail to be if I see you prosper.—But why are you silent respecting one of the main conditions ; I mean your marriage ?—Have you not yet made your choice ?”

With the usual timidity with which such

questions are commonly answered, the son replied : " I have, father."

" Do I know the lady?"

With still greater timidity he continued :  
" It is but very recently that you have become acquainted with her."—But his words suddenly began to flow most rapidly, on his beginning to praise the virtues of his beloved, and to reproach the malice of certain wretches, whose malignant and envenomed tongues not even the most pure and spotless virtue could escape.

" This preface is enough to frighten one.  
—But tell me the name of the person you love."

His son was nothing the better for having pronounced the name of the widow in a subdued and tremulous voice. He was only obliged to repeat it the louder.

“ So, it is she !” said the old gentleman seriously, while he took a few steps up and down the room. “ The widow !—Are you in earnest ; or—”

“ It is the object of my most sanguine, of my most fervent, wishes ! for which I solicit your kind approbation, your fatherly consent.”

“ Every thing, I trust, has been already settled between you ; you are both of one and the same mind ?”

How happy did the son now feel in having followed the advice of his brother-in-law, and to be able to protest, with the fullest truth, that not even the first word of love had been interchanged between him and the widow, under the presumed consent of the father.

“ So much the better,” said the old gentle-

man. "Then at all events you will have nothing to retract."

"Retract, my dear father? Is there then any thing to be retracted?"

"I see quite plainly the whole course of this love of yours. You have acted in regard to the widow with an uprightness and a generosity to which your heart bears testimony, that they do you honour, the greatest honour. Thus her presence became naturally agreeable to you, for it reminded you of the noblest act of your life: but as for a genuine, sincere passion, a real and fervent love, which will last till old age, and might fully indemnify you for every thing that you would be obliged to renounce or sacrifice for her sake—no, my son! I cannot possibly suppose this to be the case; I cannot, I assure you."

"And why not, my good father? What

should I be obliged to renounce for her sake? What is to be sacrificed?—For my part I cannot imagine.”

“ Is then wealth no consideration with you, which so many others might have brought you? —The widow has no fortune of her own.”

“ Very true; but—”

“ Out of the miserable wreck of her husband’s property, her portion, according to our laws, will be the moiety only; and what can that possibly be?”

“ Well, I will restrict myself, my dear father; I will reduce the expenses of the firm as well as of my household to the narrowest compass possible. I will become economical and active in the highest degree.”

“ Very well! But all this for whom?—This

is a question you will ask some time or other, and which *I* must ask *now*. For a woman, who is no longer in the first bloom of youth, and of whose beauty, after a few short years, perhaps scarcely a vestige will remain."

"Is it then her beauty to which I look? I call God to witness, that, in this regard I have never compared her with any other woman breathing. What touched my heart, and made me hers for ever, were the virtues which she evinced in so many a sad and trying situation, and of which I have been for months the near and happy witness."

The old gentleman walked once more up and down the room, and was silent.—"She has children," resumed he, after a few moments pause.

"They increase my love for her. They are two angels."



“Yes, but angels who have necessities. Suppose the little which will remain to them out of the property of their father, should through some cause or other be lost; these children, who have called you father, will lay you under the obligation of providing for them as a father.”

“That I should certainly do, and with the greatest joy in the world.”

“With joy?—But what you bestow upon them, will be so much taken from your own children. You will foolishly lavish upon strangers that property which should benefit your own.—How can you even conceive such an idea? How can you cherish it, even for a single instant?”

The son knew his father too well not to be extremely surprised at all this, and he said: “The sentiments which you are uttering, do

not emanate from your own heart and soul, my father; no, I am sure they do not.”—

“What do you mean?”

“Yes, you create another heart and soul for yourself; a strange, narrow, and contracted heart, and which you would fain persuade me was also my own. From this you draw the arguments by which you think to confound or convince me.—I see I have altogether forfeited your esteem, and lost it for ever! I must go hence my own way—and I will do so! The only wish I have under heaven”—and here he folded his hands together with great energy—“is that you may live long, very long, and behold with your own eyes how much you mistook me, and how much you did me wrong!”—He turned away from his father towards the window, with a heart entirely distracted, and torn by the most acute and agonising feelings.

A more unequivocal proof of his sincerity, and of the entire change in his character, his father could not demand.—After a profound and solemn silence, during which he left time for his son to recompose himself, he called him softly by his name, "*Charles!*"

Struck by the affecting expression, and the tremulous tone in which this was uttered, the son felt as it were involuntarily impelled to turn round. And what were his feelings, when he beheld the good and venerable old man standing with his eyes filled with tears, and his paternal arms widely opened to receive him. "*Charles!*" exclaimed the old man once more, "why have you made yourself so long a mystery to me?"—And now the son, overpowered by his feelings, although he was still uncertain what he had to hope, rushed forward, grasped his father's hand and covered it with kisses.

"Will you," said Mr. Stark, "will you in this sacred hour, so memorable to both of us, swear to me, swear to me most solemnly, that you will never think otherwise, than you have declared you do at this moment? that you will never, not even in the inmost recesses of your heart reproach the good Lyk with her want of fortune, or with her children? that you will estimate her love and her virtues above all fortune, and ever look upon her children as if they were your own?—"

The son was not only touched, his inmost soul was shaken.—"I will, I will!" said he in broken accents, and was unable to utter a single syllable more.

"I accept this emotion of your heart in the place of an oath."—And thus saying, the father threw his arms round his son's neck, drew him to his bosom and covered his cheek

with the paternal kisses of love and affection. —After a long pause he said: “As to the footing upon which I shall establish you, be under no apprehension on that head; rely upon me; I am no ungenerous father: take then my house and my firm, and with them, my tender and fatherly blessing upon your love!”—

Such a rapid and varied change of feelings, was more than the heart of the son could bear. Instead of thanking his father, he staggered backward to reach a chair, upon which he threw himself nearly breathless. A happy gush of tears relieved his over-burthened heart, while the old gentleman, who had taken a seat close to him, assisted with his own hand in drying up the tears of his son, and continued to repeat to him: “Enough of this; be a man! Dry up your tears, dear *Charles*! We must now go to your mother to let her

participate in our joy.—Who knows how long and how impatiently she may have been expecting us?—And if I am not greatly mistaken, we shall find there two others likewise, who are painfully longing for our appearance.”

## CHAPTER XV.

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THE doctor and his wife had really, as Mr. Stark conjectured, repaired to the mother's, in order to learn as early as possible the result of the interview, which they knew was to take place. To what a pitch their expectation was raised, may be conceived from the very great and lively interest they had hitherto felt in their brother's welfare, and the unremitting pains they had taken to promote his happiness. They thought they had very good reasons for anticipating a happy issue to the interview, and yet, precisely on account of their anxiety, they were induced to participate in their mother's uneasiness, who, as *her* heart was still more tremblingly alive to the result, felt nothing but melancholy forebodings.

How delightfully then were they surprised, when they beheld their father enter, still holding the hand of his son, and at once testifying to them the joy of his heart by his smiles, and his emotion by his moistened and reddened eyes. He led his son, who still covered his face with his handkerchief, to his wife and said: "Here, dear mother, here I bring you a good, a worthy son, who taking consideration of your age, wishes to take off your hands all the cares and troubles of the household, which for a long time past, have become burdensome to you.—He will transfer them to a young and excellent woman, whom he solicits you to accept as a daughter, and he hopes you will pronounce the blessing of a mother upon his love.—You will never guess his choice, that I am sure of;—nor you either," said he turning to his daughter, with a significant smile, and threatening both with his finger.



Amidst the blessings of his mother, and the cordial wishes of his sister and brother-in-law, young Mr. Stark could not so easily dry his eyes.—At length all united in thanking and caressing the father, who embraced them all in their turns, but who for this evening was not able to resume all his usual cheerfulness and good humour. The feelings with which he had been so deeply penetrated during the interview with his son, were of too serious a nature, to allow him immediately to resume the jocular spirit, with which on other occasions, he used to season the conversation.

He could not be dissuaded from proceeding himself the next day, to personate the wooer for his son.—Whether Mrs. Lyk, on occasion of this visit, felt pleasantly or disagreeably surprised; whether she gave an answer of a consenting, or of a negative kind, nobody will enquire.—

The marriage was one of the most happy there had been in the place for years; for each member of the family was united most intimately to the other by the tenderest bonds of love and affection. Mr. Stark lived till a very advanced age to enjoy the happiness and concord of the whole of his family, and saw himself blessed with the felicity—at one time scarcely hoped for—of pressing to his heart grand-children, who not only were his descendants by blood, but who also bore his name.

END OF LORENZ STARK.



## POSTSCRIPT.

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No apology is needed for having introduced to the British Public, ENGEL's family picture of *Lorenz Stark*.

A living portrait of the manners peculiar to any age and country is always interesting; and a more faithful one than that here drawn, of a German fire-side about half a century ago, will not easily be found.

But there were other reasons, independent of the intrinsic merit of the work, which determined the translator in his present choice.—There are few subjects on which so many erroneous ideas prevail in this country, as on German literature, at least that portion of it which is connected with taste and imagination. Does the title of a book bespeak it to be “from the German,”—mysterious associations are at once awakened of

“Goblins, spectres, and chimeras dire.”

Is a play announced as “from the German,”—the mind is immediately led to anticipate a copious display of sickly sentiment, over-wrought delicacy, and sophisticated morality. In fact, German mysticism and German sentimentality have almost become proverbial.

This prejudice is the more surprising, when it is remembered, that the standard writers of Germany, such as Lessing, Herder, Klopstock,

Göthe, Schiller\*, J. v. Müller, Jean Paul Frederick Richter, &c. are wholly guiltless of these unfounded charges; if they are remarkable for being unusually profound, and for power of imagination, it is a profundity that may not inaptly be compared to those beautiful Swiss lakes, which are at once so deep and yet so clear, that the surrounding Alps, reflected in their waters, seem to reach to their very bottom. It is true that they have sometimes, though rarely, employed the wonderful and the terrific; but, in that respect, are they not borne out by the example of the greatest

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\* With respect to the 'Robbers' of Schiller, it is but justice to the memory of this great and virtuous man, to state a fact which may not be generally known;—that so much did he disapprove of this production of his early youth, that he would never allow it to be represented at Weimar, the place of his residence.—We feel much pleasure in referring the reader for an account of this extraordinary writer to the 'Life of Frederick von Schiller': which has lately appeared, and which is in every respect worthy of its subject.

among the English poets? and does an occasional happy display of talent in this department, necessarily argue an undue bias to this species of writing, to the exclusion of truth and nature? The profoundest of English critics have regarded it as one of Shakespear's titles to praise, that he

“ Exhausted worlds, and then imagined new.”

—Yes, if Europe looks with wonder on the wilder fancies that pervade the *Faust* of Göthe, Germany delights to point to that serenity of nature and truth which breathe in almost all the other productions of this poet.

After having carefully investigated the origin of the notion so generally prevalent respecting *German sentimentality*, the translator feels persuaded that it may, in a great measure, be ascribed to the influence which the two plays, *The Stranger* and *Pizarro*, exerted, and have since continued to exert in this country. By the introduction of these pieces, Sheridan gave a convincing proof,

that a man may be a brilliant and highly-gifted writer, and still be, at times, a bad critic. Had he listened to the voice of Germany with respect to these dramas, or consulted its opinion of the talents of Kotzebue in general\*, he would not

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\* *Kotzebue* was undoubtedly a man of great talent. In many of his numerous comedies and lighter pieces we trace the able writer, who is perfectly at home in this department of the stage ; but whenever he attempts the higher walks of the drama, his efforts are marked with the stamp of mediocrity. This opinion was most unequivocally manifested by the public voice at the period of their appearance, in spite of the applause with which several of them were received as well in Germany, as in France and England ; nor has the opinion thus pronounced been ever retracted. It would be no difficult task to account for the applause which these productions obtained in these different countries, but it would lead us too far from our present purpose. One remarkable fact, however, we cannot help mentioning ; that Kotzebue, whose literary and political career, and even whose tragical death, tended so materially to injure the liberties of his country, should also have contributed to depreciate the value of its literature and taste in the opinion of a people, than whom no other nation stands so high in the estimation of Germany.



surely have attempted to transplant them into British ground. But, ushered in as they were under the sanction of so high a name as that of the author of the *School for Scandal*, it is no wonder that they were regarded by those unacquainted with German literature — and how vast a portion of the public did this include! — as the very models of German taste and perfection of writing. When afterwards, the voice of impartial criticism was raised against these productions, her censures were unfortunately extended from these examples of individual bad taste, to the whole German school, and to the general literature of that country, which had actually refused to adopt them as the genuine offspring of her national genius.

Since the period here mentioned, the *Lenore* of *Bürger*, some tales of *Tieck*, several romances of De la Motte Fouqué, &c. and recently even *der Freischütz* itself, with its supernatural horrors, have contributed to associate with the idea of German literature, a gloom and mystery by

no means favourable to its reputation. But, however prejudicial such a colouring may be, when imputed to the general literature of a great and intellectual nation, it must be acknowledged as infinitely less detrimental than the prejudice which we have even now endeavoured to counteract.

The influence of error is transient; that of truth eternal: the latter must make its way in spite of all opposition. We feel assured, that the period is not far distant, when more correct ideas of German literature will prevail. In the meantime the introduction of some standard German works, equally free from horrors on the one hand, and of false sentiment on the other, may tend to hasten that wished-for period. It is therefore our intention to present the British public with a series of works of this class, to which the present one eminently belongs. *Lorenz Stark* is distinguished by simplicity of design, truth of feeling, and knowledge of the human heart. The family picture here drawn becomes

doubly valuable from contrast. Since the period here described, the consequences of the French revolution, have had an immense influence on manners and opinion. The Germany of our day appears quite another country, and though by the diffusion of more liberal ideas, a higher, more energetic, and therefore better spirit prevails, we must likewise acknowledge that the ancient purity of morals, the courtesy of the olden time—a very different thing from modern civility, which consists almost entirely in external show—and the respect due to old age and authority, bear in our days a less vivid hue in the national character.

In conclusion, a short biographical notice of Engel may not perhaps be quite unwelcome.—The life of an author is seldom rich in incident; his history is told in a few words; he is born to study, to write, to suffer, and to die. The lot of the author of *Lorenz Stark* was not however so unfortunately cast.

*Johann Jacob Engel* was born in 1741, in Parchim, a small town in the territory of the Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin. His father, a clergyman, was a gentleman of good education, and lived in respectable circumstances. It was from his paternal care that our promising youth received the rudiments of his education; he was afterwards sent to a *Gymnasium*—for such is the name given in Germany to public schools under the immediate superintendence of Government, and in which young students are prepared for the university. Young Engel, after having left this establishment, went, in order to complete his studies, first to the University of Rostock, and at a later period to that of Leipzig. Early distinguished as a man of talent, he most successfully united his efforts with those of Lessing, Mendelssohn, and others, to purify the German prose, and rescue it from that state of barbarism into which it had fallen during the seventeenth century. Engel was appointed, while yet but a young man, to one of the professorships of the *Joachimsthal-Gymnasium* in Berlin, and his fame

increased so highly, that the late King of Prussia, chose him as tutor to his son, the actual reigning king, which honourable post he filled in a highly creditable manner. He was afterwards appointed to the situation of Superintendent of the Royal Theatre in Berlin; and it was then he wrote his famous work: *Ideas on the Mimic Art*, a book so highly distinguished for acuteness of observation, taste, and sound principles, that ever since its appearance it has served as a practical guide to actors, and has been translated into most of the languages of Europe. The extraordinary degree of excellency to which the Berlin stage had attained at the close of the eighteenth century, was in a great measure, due to Engel's indefatigable exertions. But as is generally the case in such a situation, he was exposed to so many vexations by the intrigues inseparable from a theatre, and besides suffered so much from a nervous head-ache, and low spirits, that in 1794, he resigned his post, left Berlin, and retired to Schwerin. When the present King of Prussia ascended the throne in

1797, Engel could not resist the pressing invitations of his royal pupil, and he returned to Berlin, where he resided beloved and respected by the greatest as well as most estimable men of his time, and continued to augment his fame by his writings, till the year 1802, when being on a visit to his aged mother, he died, after a short illness, in his native town, at the age of 61.

His most remarkable works, besides the above named are: "An Essay on Reason;" "Elements of a Theory on the different kinds of Poetry;" "The Philosopher of the World;" "The Mirror for Princes."—For the stage he wrote two little Dramas: "The Page" and "The grateful Son."—It is said, that in the character of *Lorenz Stark*, Engel has erected a monument to his much respected grand-father, Mr. Brasch, a magistrate and rich merchant of his native place.

For the purity of his style, and the solidity

of his ideas, Engel is justly entitled to rank among the classics of his country; nor does his character stand less high in the annals of virtue. To sum up all in a single word, he was a being endowed with a noble and exalted mind, he was an honour to his country, a benefit to mankind and "that noblest work of God," a truly honest man.

A complete collection of Engel's works appeared in Berlin, in 12 volumes, 1801—1806.

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the 1990s, the number of people in the UK who are employed in the public sector has increased by 1.5 million, from 2.5 million in 1980 to 4 million in 1995. The public sector has become a major employer in the UK, and its growth has been a major factor in the overall growth of the economy.

The public sector has also become a major employer of women. In 1980, women made up 40% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this had increased to 50%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of women in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.

The public sector has also become a major employer of people with disabilities. In 1980, people with disabilities made up 1% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this had increased to 3%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of people with disabilities in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.

The public sector has also become a major employer of people from ethnic minorities. In 1980, people from ethnic minorities made up 2% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this had increased to 5%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of people from ethnic minorities in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.

The public sector has also become a major employer of people from the lower social classes. In 1980, people from the lower social classes made up 10% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this had increased to 20%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of people from the lower social classes in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.

The public sector has also become a major employer of people from the lower income groups. In 1980, people from the lower income groups made up 10% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this had increased to 20%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of people from the lower income groups in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.

The public sector has also become a major employer of people from the lower education levels. In 1980, people from the lower education levels made up 10% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this had increased to 20%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of people from the lower education levels in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.

The public sector has also become a major employer of people from the lower health status. In 1980, people from the lower health status made up 10% of the public sector workforce, and by 1995, this had increased to 20%. This increase has been driven by a number of factors, including the growth of the public sector, the increasing participation of people from the lower health status in the workforce, and the increasing demand for public services.



